The Encyclopaedia of Judaism

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Second Edition

Volume III
L–Ra

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BRILL
LEIDEN • BOSTON
2005

This book is printed on acid-free paper.

ISBN 90 04 14934 1 Vol. III
ISBN 90 04 14787 X Set

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PRINTED IN THE NETHERLANDS

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Language(s) in Judaism

Language, especially Hebrew, has a theological significance in Judaism not commonly associated with language in any other religion. Three reasons account for this: (1) the Hebrew Scripture's depiction of the world's being called into being through divine utterance, suggesting that Hebrew is the very language of creation, (2) the presence in Scripture of verbatim quotations of God, again in Hebrew, and (3) the many acts of piety prescribed in Scripture and Rabbinic documents that require writing out and/or reciting a text, again, usually in Hebrew, sometimes in Aramaic. Thus, while part of the legacy Judaism inherited from its ancient Near Eastern and Hellenistic antecedents is multilingualism, Hebrew, as the language of creation and revelation, has remained central. This centrality of language continued even as, over a period of centuries, Hebrew ceased to be a spoken language and was supplanted in daily Jewish life by other languages specific to Jews, the most famous and widely spoken of which were Yiddish and Ladino. Like Hebrew, these languages became part and parcel of Jewish religious identity, employed in the study of Torah and in private, and even some public, prayers.

The fact that Judaism is a religion of sacred languages is underscored by the realization that, in the modern period, the abandonment of these languages in favor of the languages of the Jews' host cultures was symptomatic of secularization over all. This was the case even in the State of Israel, where traditional Jewish languages were abandoned in favor of a new secular language, modern Hebrew. And yet, as the second millennium C.E. draws to a close, the Hebrew of modern Israel has come to provide for probably the greatest number of Jews in history a direct access to the spiritual treasures of the Hebrew Scripture and Rabbinic literature as well as a feeling of association with the entire history of the Jews, their religion, and culture. The revival of Hebrew thus is perceived by many as part and parcel of the unfolding drama of God's messianic redemption, and Hebrew has retained its place not only as a language Jews speak but as a Jewish language, significant in the theology and, most important, eschatology, of Judaism.

To understand the significance of language in Judaism, we must begin with Scripture and, in particular, the creation narrative. Nine of the acts of creation described in Gen. 1:1–2:4a are introduced by the words, "and God said." Turning the very first word of the Bible, *Bereshit* ("in the beginning"), into a divine utterance, M. Ab. 5:1 determined that the cosmos came into being as a result of ten divine utterances. The later exegetical tradition found in this assertion of M. Ab. a restatement of Ps. 33:6, "By the word of the Lord the heavens were made," or of Ps. 33:9, "He said [a word], and it was [so]."

In Prov. 8:22, personified Wisdom declares that she was created at the very beginning of God's dominion, even before the watery abyss whose preexistence is taken for granted in Gen. 1:2. Moreover, personified Wisdom declares (Prov. 8:22–31) that, at the time of the creation of the cosmos, she accompanied God as a confidant. Already in Ps. 119 this personified Wisdom of Proverbs is identified with Torah, the same Torah that, in Ps. 119, as already in Deut. 17 and Neh. 9,

comprises a God-given book of instructions concerning human behavior.

Simple logic suggests that if Wisdom is Torah and Wisdom is God's companion at Creation, then it was the Torah that accompanied God at Creation. It is a short step from this logical inference to the idea, first attested in the writings of the first century C.E. Alexandrian Jewish philosopher Philo, later in Gen. Rabbah 1:1, and still later among medieval Kabbalists, that the Torah was the blueprint used by God in creating the cosmos. It is, further, only a small step from this notion to the conclusion that the language of the Hebrew Scripture—and with it, the language of the Mishnah, the liturgy, most of the midrashic literature, and the language in which the rabbis of the two Talmuds express their definitive statements—is also the language of Creation. This means, ultimately, that the twenty-two letters of Hebrew's alphabet are the alphabet of Creation.

In keeping with this idea, B. Ber. 55a informs us that Judah had a tradition from Rab (late third century C.E.) that Bezalel, who was called upon to the fashion the vessels of the Tabernacle (Exod. 31:1–11) and implicitly, therefore, to build the Tabernacle itself, was able to do so because he knew how to combine the letters by which the world was created. Under Kabbalistic influence, this same theory of the power of the Hebrew alphabet comes to suggest even to some adherents of late twentieth century popular Judaism, especially in the State of Israel, that faulty-worded prayers and faulty-written *mezuzot* and *tefillin* can and do directly and adversely affect the health and well-being of persons and the cosmos.

Y. Meg. 1:9 notes that Eleazar and Yohanan—both late third century C.E. Palestinian Amoraim—disagreed regarding the meaning of Gen. 11:1: "The whole world was of one language and few words." One of these two rabbis (the Talmud seems neither to remember nor to care which) held that "and few words" means that from the beginning people spoke different languages but understood each other. The other rabbi holds that it means that prior to the confusion of tongues (Gen. 11:7–9) all people spoke God's language, that is, Hebrew.

An alternative understanding of Gen. 11:1, proposed by Hebrew University Assyriologist Aaron Shaffer and published by William W. Hallo,[1] translates Gen. 11:1, "All the earth was of one speech and corresponding words." This reading sees in this verse a reference to the bilingualism of ancient Near Eastern civilizations beginning in the third millennium B.C.E. It intimates that the bilingualism of Judaism is part of Judaism's legacy from the ancient Near East. Regardless of their real connection to Gen. 11:1, both the idea of Hebrew as God's language and the phenomena of bilingualism and multilingualism are part and parcel of Jewish religious life from biblical times.

It was inferred from God's speaking Hebrew throughout Scripture that Hebrew is, in fact, God's holy tongue (see M. Sot. 7:1). This inference, combined with the availability of Hebrew as a spoken language in post-70 C.E. Palestine—albeit rivaled by both Aramaic and Greek—and coupled with the perspicacity of the Tannaim, especially Judah the Patriarch, tipped the scales in favor of Hebrew in general , though not in any particular dialect. Hebrew thus was designated and remained Judaism's unrivaled "holy tongue" for at least two millennia.

Interestingly enough, the only biblical text that explicitly associates Hebrew with the *religion* of Israel is Is. 19:19, which says that at some better time yet to be, "there shall be five [a round number meaning "many"?] towns in the land of Egypt speaking Canaanite [i.e., Hebrew] and swearing by the Lord of Hosts." The latter verse is part of a speech in which Isaiah (eighth century B.C.E.) declares in the name of God that Israel, Egypt, and Assyria will all be peoples of the one God. The passage suggests that the adoption of Hebrew will be a sign of Egypt's acceptance of the sovereignty of the Lord. Moreover, the use of Hebrew as an act of religious devotion is placed on a par with swearing by the Lord. Is. 19:19 is, therefore, the clearest Scriptural adumbration of the M. Sot. 7:1's conception of Hebrew as "holy tongue."

Note that in the Hebrew Scriptures, Aramaic appears either as the speech of outsiders (Gen. 31:47; Dan. 2:4) or as the language of Persian archives and diplomatic correspondence (Ezra 4:8–6:18; 7:12–26).

Hebrew and Greek as Sacred Languages Among the Jews of Alexandria

The Letter of Aristeas attests to the belief that the Greek version of the Pentateuch, the Septuagint, no less than the Hebrew Pentateuch, was given by God in the presence of representatives of the twelve tribes of Israel. One consequence of this belief was the willingness of Philo Judaeus of Alexandria (first century C.E.) to derive lessons from Greek etymologies based upon the Septuagint just as he derives lessons from Hebrew etymologies based upon the Hebrew version. Rabbis of the Amoraic period and medieval Kabbalists continue to derive lessons from Greek etymologies of words in biblical Hebrew!

Thus, when the Mishnah appeared in its final form, c. 220 C.E., referring to Hebrew as "the holy language," it reckoned with a belief going back at least 400 years, that Greek no less than Hebrew is a sacred language in which both Scripture and liturgy may be sung in the synagogue. This legacy is reflected in 1) the abundant Greek inscriptions in synagogues and Jewish tombs in both Palestine and the diaspora; 2) the presence of both Greek and Hebrew versions of biblical books at Qumran alongside books of law (i.e., *serek*, a functional equivalent of Rabbinic*mishnah*, *halakhah*) in Hebrew and of biblical eisegesis in Hebrew and Aramaic but not in Greek (!); 3) the discussion in M. Meg. 1:8 of the permissibility of writing biblical books in Greek.

Language(s) in the Dead Sea Scrolls

E. Qimron, *The Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Atlanta, 1986, p. 116) explains that the Hebrew of the non-biblical scrolls recovered from Qumran is not an imitation of Biblical Hebrew but a continuation of Late Biblical Hebrew, a dialect attested in the biblical books of Eccl., 1–2 Chr., and perhaps Jonah and Cant. Moreover, Qimron shows that the Hebrew typical of Qumran shares with Mishnaic Hebrew, first attested as a living language in the Bar Kokhba letters from Wadi Murabbat (132–135 C.E.), not only such features of interest to linguists as the shift from *s* to *sh*, the non-assimilation of *nun* before another consonant, and the weakening of the guttural letters, but also 175 words either unattested in Biblical Hebrew or attested in wholly different meanings. Among these terms are *ger* in the sense "proselyte;" *minhag* meaning "custom;" *hummash* meaning "Pentateuch;" *abot* meaning "[the three] patriarchs"; *ben berit*, lit., "covenant member," meaning "Jew;" *seder* meaning "order;" and *talmud* meaning "learning."

It was argued by Rabin (*Qumran Scrolls*, Oxford, 1957, p. 67) that the persons who produced the Mishnah deliberately abandoned the use of Biblical Hebrew, the medium of the Dead Sea Scrolls, in favor of Mishnaic Hebrew in order to distinguish their teaching from that of the sectarians. In fact, too little is known either of the various Judaisms that antedate the Mishnah or of the various forms of Hebrew and Aramaic spoken in Palestine before and after the Mishnah to make it worthwhile to speculate on this issue. However, the Dead Sea Scrolls do reveal that, contrary to Max Kadushin in *The Rabbinic Mind* (New York, 1972, pp. 291–95), some of the most important valuational vocabulary and the underlying ideology that set apart the Judaism of the Mishnah from religious conceptions found in Hebrew Scripture derive from the legacy of some or even many of the Judaisms that existed in Second Temple times.

A special case is the Hebrew of the Qumran text called MMT or *Miqsat Ma'aseh ha-Torah* and dated to 159–152 B.C.E. Precisely because it bears the literary character of a public letter, its language, like that of the bodies (as against formulaic introductions and conclusions) of letters throughout the history of Semitic writing, closely resembles the spoken language of the author(s).[2] Most important for the role of language in post-70 Judaism is Qimron's statement: "Its [i.e., the language of MMT's] similarity [primarily in vocabulary] to MH [= Mishnaic Hebrew] results from the fact that both MMT and MH reflect spoken forms of Hebrew current in the Second Temple period."[3]

According to M. Meg. 1:8, phylacteries and *mezuzot* must be written in the square Hebrew characters that, according to Y. Meg.

1:9 and B. San. 21b, were brought to the land of Israel by Ezra the Scribe. Similarly, M. Meg. 2:2 stresses that the Scroll of Esther must be read on the Festival of Purim from a scroll written in the square Hebrew characters. As we know from the coins of the Hasmoneans in the second century B.C.E. as well as from the coins of Bar Kokhba (132–135 C.E.), Jews in the Second Temple period and later attempted to employ the paleo-Hebrew script for official purposes and preferred it to the square alphabet, which eventually prevailed. Among the biblical manuscripts from Qumran are fragments, or more, of copies of each of the books of the Hexateuch in paleo-Hebrew. Moreover, it was common scribal practice at Qumran to write the four letter proper name of God in paleo-Hebrew script even within the majority of biblical scrolls that employed the square characters for the remainder of the sacred text.

The latter usage of this script suggests that for the scribes of Qumran and for the ideologues in whose service they worked, the paleo-Hebrew script had a greater measure of sanctity and was to be employed if not in the transcription of biblical books at least in the transcription of the ineffable name. When, therefore, the Mishnah insists that certain sacred texts must be transcribed in square script (Heb., *Ashurit*), it is taking a very firm stand in what must have been a controversy during the Second Temple era, namely, whether or not Scriptures transcribed wholly or even partly in the relatively new square script should be employed. It is not beyond the realm of possibility that the insistence on a particular script to accompany the holy tongue was part of the program of state-building (or was it building a religion out of what had been a minor sect?), which made possible the creation of a religion based upon a law-code under the authority of the patriarch, who derived his authority from Roman law.

It is well known from early antiquity through the modern era that just as ethnic groups are associated with particular languages or dialects, so are particular political entities/religions associated with particular scripts. Five examples suffice: 1) the adoption of the Latin alphabet by modern Turkey to symbolize Turkey's westernization and turning away from the Middle East; 2) the distinction between Hindi and Urdu, which is essentially the writing of the same language in two different scripts, the former by Hindus using the Sanskrit alphabet and the latter by Muslims using Arabic script; 3) the oft-repeated pair of phrases in the biblical Book of Esther: "to each ethnic group according to its dialect; to each [of the 127] province[s] according to its [national] script;" 4) the national/religious lines drawn in Eastern Europe by the respective use of the Latin and Cyrillic alphabets; 5) the Soviet Communist regime's forcing of the Jews of the Kuba region of Azerbaijan to use first the Latin alphabet and later the Cyrillic alphabet in writing their ancestral Judeo-Tat language, thus severing a major tie of these Jews to their ancestral religion.

The employment in Hebrew biblical texts at Qumran of two different forms of the Hebrew alphabet, sometimes in combination, points to the Hasmonean and later attempt to revive the paleo-Hebrew script and treat it as holier than the square characters. Similarly, the Qumran texts reflect the tri-lingualism of Palestinian Jewry at the end of the Second Temple period. The fact that books of law found among the Dead Sea Scroll were written primarily in a form of Late Biblical Hebrew, which incorporated numerous elements that belong to a spoken dialect and whose continuation is Mishnaic Hebrew, suggests that it was no great innovation for Judah the Patriarch to compose his definitive law code in a form of that same dialect. Of course, he could have chosen Aramaic, as did the author of the Scroll of Fasts (Megillat Taanit), and the entire history of Judaism would have been different. Moreover, the bulk of the literature from Qumran, which expounds and expands upon the Bible, is also written in Late Biblical Hebrew. The one obvious exception is the Genesis Apocryphon, composed in Aramaic. Perhaps the fact that Rabbinic literature chose primarily to speak in Hebrew especially about biblical themes is part of the legacy of Second Temple Judaism, concerning which the Dead Sea Scrolls have permitted us a glimpse as through a glass darkly.

Some of the biblical manuscripts found at Qumran are written in Greek. The copying of biblical texts in Greek reflects the fact that from the third century B.C.E., Jews in both Palestine and elsewhere had been reading Scripture both publicly and privately in Greek as well as in Hebrew. Interestingly, but not surprisingly in light of the comparison to nation building elsewhere in human history, the Mishnah, which insists on square script for biblical texts written in the Hebrew language, does not attack or seem threatened by biblical texts written in Greek (M. Meg. 1:8). Unquestionably, it was the choice of Mishnaic Hebrew as against Aramaic or Greek, both of which were available and viable choices in 220 C.E. Palestine, first for the Mishnah and ultimately for the bulk of Rabbinic literature, that made it obvious to subsequent generations that Hebrew is "the holy tongue" and hence the proper and eternal language of the Jewish religion. What becomes equally obvious once one reckons with the historical fact that Hebrew, specifically Mishnaic Hebrew, was a living language in late Second Temple Palestine is that "holy tongue" in the context of M. Sot. is not analogous to nineteenth century B.C.E. Hittite as "language of the gods," that is, a dead language used *only* for liturgical purposes. Rather this is a value-laden statement designed to encourage the use of a language that is perceived as virtually the same language as that/those of the bulk of Hebrew Scripture.

It has long been noted that, in the same context in which Y. Meg. 1:9 refers to Aquila's version of the Pentateuch as the Tannaim's officially recognized Greek version of the Pentateuch, B. Meg. 3a refers to Targum Onkelos and Targum Jonathan respectively as the Babylonian Talmud's (and ultimately Judaism's) official Aramaic translations of the Pentateuch and Prophets. Obviously, the Babylonian Talmud, addressed initially to the Aramaic-speaking Jews of the Sassanian Empire, chose and prescribed Aramaic versions, which, whenever they depart ever so slightly from a literal rendering of the Hebrew, reflect and support that Talmud's version of Judaism. No less important is the Jerusalem Talmud's subtle insinuation that the Greek version *par excellence* is the in-house version produced by a disciple of Aqiba rather than the classic Septuagint.

Equally interesting is M. Meg. 1:8's strategy in fighting and winning the war over which language will be recognized as the one and only holy tongue. An anonymous suggestion that scriptural scrolls may be written in any language is followed by Gamaliel II's assertion that sages had permitted such scrolls—employed for public reading in the synagogue—to be written only in [Hebrew and] Greek. Of course! The only ancient Jewish versions of Scripture that were ever considered divinely inspired and fit to be read as part of divine worship were the Hebrew and the Septuagint. The important point made by M. Meg. 1:8, however, is that phylacteries and *mezuzot*, unlike synagogue scrolls, may be written only in square script Hebrew. One very subtle message is that the texts contained in phylacteries and *mezuzot*, which are sealed up and read only by God, are written in God's language, that is, Hebrew and not Greek. Another subtle message is that the Mishnah fought its language battle by going directly into every Jewish home and dictating the rules for phylacteries and *mezuzot*. It wasted no energy on the boards of directors of Greek-singing synagogues.

Mishnaic Hebrew and Aramaic in the Rabbinic Corpora

As we have seen, one of the spoken languages of the Jews of Palestine in the last two centuries B.C.E. and the first centuries C.E. was the Hebrew reflected later in the Mishnah, completed c. 220 C.E. Segal[4] prefers the term Mishnaic for the dialect, which nineteenth century Christian scholars called "New Hebrew." These scholars held that this language was simply a corrupt form of Biblical Hebrew, written by persons who were incapable of writing Hebrew properly. This view is consonant with the Christian theological belief that the religion expounded in the Mishnah is a corruption of the religion of ancient Israel.

Neusner (passim in his published works on the Rabbinic corpus), like Kutscher, uses

the neutral term Middle Hebrew, reflecting the fact that Mishnaic Hebrew as a living language falls chronologically between Biblical Hebrew and Modern Hebrew. The Hebrew term *leshon mishnah* is employed by Rashi (1040–1105 C.E.) and his disciples to refer especially to the earlier phase of Rabbinic Hebrew reflected in the Mishnah, Tosefta, and other Tannaitic sources. While Yohanan b. Napha (fl. 275 C.E.) distinguishes between Biblical Hebrew, which he calls "Torah language," and Rabbinic Hebrew, which he calls "sages' language" (B. Hul. 137b; B. A.Z. 58b), M. Sot. 7:1 includes under the heading of "the holy tongue," both Biblical and Rabbinic Hebrew.

It is clear from M. Sot. 7:1, the exegesis thereof in the Tosefta and two Talmuds, and from the parallel passages in M. Ber. and M. Meg., that canonical liturgical texts existed in both forms of "the holy tongue." Whenever the rabbis believed that Scripture, oral tradition, or common sense required the recitation of a fixed canonical text, the recitation was to take place in "the holy tongue;" no sacred texts existed in any other language except for canonical versions of the Scripture in Greek (see M. Meg. 1:8 and Talmuds and commentaries ad loc.). When, however, Scripture, oral tradition, or common sense indicated that the primary concern was that a given liturgy be *understood* by ordinary people, the Mishnah and its ancient interpreters held that such a liturgy may be recited in any language, provided that the language is understood by the specific person. The ancient interpreters of the Mishnah also declared that, in most cases, even people ignorant of Hebrew could consider themselves to have fulfilled their religious duty if they read or listened to Scripture or other liturgy in that language (M. Meg. 2:1). Thus the Mishnah and its ancient exegetes expressed the conviction that Hebrew, without distinction as to dialect, is "the holy tongue."

In the very same way that the Mishnah inherited and did not seek to obliterate the tradition associated especially with Alexandria according to which Scripture could be written and read in Greek (M. Meg. 1:8), so did subsequent Rabbinic Judaism inherit and enhance the idea expressed at M. Sot. 7:1ff., namely, that both Biblical and Rabbinic Hebrew are "the holy tongue." Consequently, Mishnaic Hebrew is employed in the Babylonian Talmud for the transmission of authoritative statements attributed to Tannaim or Amoraim, formulations of prescribed behavior (*halakhah*), parables, expositions of Scripture, parables, and most traditions and anecdotes about the Tannaim and about past ages in general.[5]

It should, however, not be altogether surprising that both Talmuds employ Aramaic—Galilean Aramaic in the Jerusalem Talmud and Babylonian Aramaic in the Babylonian Talmud—in their respective discussions about the statements of Tannaim and Amoraim recorded in Mishnaic Hebrew as well as in anecdotes, which record ordinary conversations among Amoraim. One obvious fact is that, from the third century B.C.E. until the Arab conquest of the seventh century C.E., these Aramaic dialects were the standard speech of the Jews of Palestine and Babylonia respectively. But two other reasons may also explain the rather consistent use in both Talmuds of a form of Hebrew in framing authoritative statements and the use of Aramaic for the framework in which such statements are discussed.

First, as we noted above, bilingualism was an ingrained feature of the civilizations of the Near East from the third millennium B.C.E. Second, it is reasonable to suggest that the situation in life in which Aramaic was first perceived as the language used for exposition of a text recited in the holy tongue is the pre-Mishnaic Palestinian synagogue, in which the reading of the Pentateuch and the Prophets in the holy tongue was accompanied by an exposition in Aramaic. It is clear from M. Meg. 4:4ff. that with respect to the proper manner of reading Scripture and translating it into Aramaic, the Mishnah attempts to impose rules upon an entrenched practice, which presupposed the use of two distinct languages—Hebrew and Aramaic—in the studying of Torah, each with its own function.

If the elite group that produced, transmitted, and preserved the two Talmuds was equally at home in both Hebrew and Aramaic, why were the midrashic compositions

composed in late Rabbinic Hebrew and not in Galilean Aramaic? One possible answer is that, just as Hebrew and Aramaic have distinct functions within the "Oral Law" represented by the two Talmuds—Hebrew for authoritative statements; Aramaic for discussion thereof—so in the exposition of Scripture do Rabbinic Hebrew and Aramaic have precise roles. These happen to be mirror images of their respective roles in the context of the Talmuds, for Aramaic is the medium of the translations of the Pentateuch and the Prophets, which the Babylonian Talmud itself designates as canonical (Onkelos for the Pentateuch, B. Meg. 3a; B. Qid. 49a; and Jonathan for the Early and Later Prophets, B. Meg. 3a). Both of these translations are for the most part, like the Septuagint and most classic translations of Scripture, word-for-word representations in another language of what Scripture states in "the holy tongue." If the literal representation of Scripture takes place in Aramaic, late Rabbinic Hebrew is assigned the task in both the Talmuds and the independent midrashic compositions of exposition and eisegesis of Scripture.

Another explanation of why the midrash compilations emanating from the land of Israel prior to the Arab conquest are composed primarily in late Rabbinic Hebrew rather than in Aramaic may, however, be suggested. Jacob Neusner, *Are the Talmuds Interchangeable?* (Atlanta, 1995, pp. 1–42), demonstrates that while the Jerusalem Talmud shares with the Babylonian Talmud the use of Aramaic in fixed phrases and technical words, the Jerusalem Talmud, unlike the Babylonian Talmud, does not employ Aramaic "as a medium of discourse sustained or abbreviated." In fact, Neusner demonstrates, "Hebrew predominates throughout [the Jerusalem Talmud] except in stories" (p. 4). It would appear, therefore, that 1) it was common practice in the Rabbinic subcultures that produced all of Rabbinic literature to produce eisegetical literature on the Bible in Rabbinic Hebrew rather than in Aramaic; and 2) the Rabbinic subculture of the land of Israel in general preferred Rabbinic Hebrew to Aramaic as a medium for setting forth Judaism, probably because, at least from the time of the Mishnah, Rabbinic Hebrew had been perceived as part of the holy tongue. It is conceivable, therefore, that this ingrained preference for Hebrew over Aramaic alongside the cultivation of Rabbinic Hebrew in the land of Israel paved the way in the geonic period for Babylonian Jewry's translating of Talmudic texts from Aramaic into Arabic, even as Palestinian Jews were translating those same texts from Aramaic into Rabbinic Hebrew.

No discussion of Mishnaic Hebrew and its function in the particular religious tradition(s) generated by the Mishnah is complete without taking note of Neusner's observations concerning the limited repertoire of literary forms that the Mishnah employs to convey its message(s) within the manifold possibilities available to it within the confines of the syntax, vocabulary, and grammar of Mishnaic Hebrew. The literary forms utilized are: 1) the simple declarative sentence, declaring that one who does so-and-so is such-and-such; 2) the duplicated sentence, in which it is asserted that as for one who does so-and-so, behold, that one is such-and-such; 3) mild apocopation, in which the subject of the sentence is cut off from the verb as follows: one who does so-and-so, it [what he has done] is such-and-such; 4) "Extreme apocopation, in which a series of clauses is presented, none of them tightly joined to what precedes or follows and all of them cut off from the predicate of the sentence;" and 5) "contrastive complex predicate:" one who does . . . is unclean, and one who does not . . . is clean."[6]

Chaim Rabin distinguishes within the Hebrew of the Rabbinic literature a language he holds to have been a rival of Late Biblical Hebrew during the latter half of the second century B.C.E. He refers to a literary dialect whose grammar and syntax are those of Mishnaic Hebrew but whose vocabulary is an admixture of Biblical Hebrew and Rabbinic Hebrew. This language, which he finds embedded in M. Yeb. 16:7, B. Qid. 66a, and in Sifra Num. 22, is the Hebrew dialect found also in the standard prayers of the Rabbinic Liturgy. Its characteristics are 1) Mishnaic sentence construction; 2) biblical accretions in syntax and inflection; and 3) the open vocabulary of natural poetry.

Further investigation reveals more idiosyncratic styles within the corpora commonly understood to have been written and preserved in early and late Rabbinic or Mishnaic Hebrew. Common to the use of all these dialects by the Jewish men and women who, from the promulgation of the Mishnah until now, as an act of piety, read the documents of Judaism in these dialects is the conviction enshrined in and propagated by M. Meg. and M. Sot., that collectively these dialects belong to "the holy tongue." Many acts of piety, listed in M. Sot. 7:1, can be performed in any language; but if Hebrew indeed is the holy tongue, why avail oneself of this option at all?

Aramaic, Hebrew, and Arabic in the Religion of the Geonic Period

Blau[7] explains that the phase of the Arabic language called Middle Arabic originated among the lower strata of the native urban population in the Middle East soon after and as a consequence of the great Arab conquest of the seventh century C.E. He holds that under Arab rule urban Jews and Christians began speaking Middle Arabic as early as the seventh century C.E. However, no Jewish literary works in this language have been preserved prior to the ninth century C.E.

When, in the geonic period, Middle Arabic replaced Aramaic as the common speech throughout the Middle East, Palestinian *yeshivot* began to study both geonic books of *halakah*, such as *Halakhot Pesuqot*, and Talmudic texts in translations in Rabbinic Hebrew. In Babylonia, however, the Aramaic of the Babylonian Talmud continued to be the language of Rabbinic scholarship as late as the time of Hai Gaon (939–1038). Hence the Babylonian geonim usually wrote their responsa in Aramaic, often with the use of some Arabic terms. Blau holds that the adoption of Middle Arabic in place of Aramaic for prose writings on religious subjects was facilitated by the fact that Aramaic had never set apart the Jews of Babylonia from their gentile neighbors. If, prior to the Muslim conquest, Aramaic was a language shared by Jews and non-Jews (Mann, pp. 446–47; 554), by the ninth century, Middle Arabic had replaced Aramaic as the shared language of Jew and gentile throughout the Middle East and as far West as Spain.

Blau points out that in the medieval period Jews wrote Arabic in a number of styles. In medical texts and in letters from persons in high places, where the assumed readership was not specifically Jewish, Classical Arabic, the official literary language of the Muslim majority, based upon the language of the Quran, was employed with some elements of the spoken language, Middle Arabic. Maimonides (1135–1204) employed this style also in his Commentary on the Mishnah and in his *Guide to the Perplexed*. A semi-classical Middle Arabic employed for religious texts and private correspondence is reflected in Maimonides' responsa. Blau points out that the general use by the Jews of the Hebrew script in writing Arabic clearly shows the barrier that separated the bulk of Jewry from Arabic and Islamic culture.

With some very minor exceptions,[8] from the ninth century on, Jews in the Islamic world composed poetry in Biblical Hebrew. Blau identifies two reasons for this: 1) no tradition of religious poetry in Arabic existed and 2) poetry, by its nature, would have been written not in colloquial Middle Arabic but in Classical Arabic, which was no more accessible than Hebrew. Moreover, Saadiah (882–942) encouraged the composition of liturgical poems in Hebrew, and he established rules for writing such poetry. Another reason for the composition of liturgical poetry in Hebrew is that the Mishnah, followed by both Talmuds, had treated Hebrew as the holy language of the liturgy. Consequently, both the elaborate liturgical poems of pre-Islamic Hebrew *payyetanim*, such as Yannai and Kallir, which never fully achieved the status of normative, and the anonymous geonic poems, which to this day almost universally introduce the middle blessing of the *amidah* in each of the four Sabbath services, were composed in varieties of Hebrew.

Rabbinic Hebrew in the Writings of Medieval Ashkenazic Jewry, Ibn Ezra, and Maimonides

In the High Middle Ages in Central and Western Europe both Jews and Christians conversed in a variety of Romance and Germanic dialects. A shared convention of both Jews and Christians was that most important writing, such as law and Bible commentary, was done only in the languages of civilization—Hebrew for Jews and Latin for Christians—and not in the vulgar tongues of day-to-day discourse. Banitt[9] argues convincingly that Rashi's main purpose when, some 4382 times in his biblical commentaries, he renders Biblical Hebrew and Aramaic words in Northern Old French and, occasionally, in other languages, such as German, Italian, and Provençal, is to correct mistaken exegeses perpetuated in the commonly accepted oral translation of the Scriptures into the spoken languages of European Jewry.

Banitt's assumption[10] that Rashi's commentary was compiled from notes taken by his students from lectures Rashi gave in French is contradicted by the assertion of Rashi's grandson, Samuel b. Meir, in his Pentateuch Commentary at Num. 34:2, that his grandfather had written a commentary replete with line drawings! This is corroborated by surviving manuscripts of Rashi's Bible commentaries from 1233 C.E. onward. Since Rashi did compose commentaries on both the Bible and the Babylonian Talmud in Rabbinic Hebrew, which is very close to the Hebrew of the halakhic and aggadic midrashim, the question of the religious significance of Rashi's linguistic usage, which differs markedly from the Hebrew of other medieval Hebrew commentators, arises. As noted by Banitt,[11] Christians early on saw in Rashi's Bible commentary a counterpart to their own *glossa ordinaria*, which was a Latin summary of the commentaries of the Church Fathers, written in the margins of the biblical text. By composing a commentary, which not only summarized halakhah and aggadah but also contained Rashi's own observations concerning grammar, lexicography, syntax, history, and refutations of Christian exegesis, all couched in the linguistic idiom of *midrash*, Rashi's commentary succeeded at one and the same time in conveying two messages: 1) his commentary was the Jewish counterpart to the *glossa ordinaria*, using philological science to refute the Christian commentary; 2) his commentary spoke in the name of Rabbinic Judaism, not in the name of an individual commentator of the high middle ages.

So long as he lived in his native Spain, part and parcel of the Islamic world, Abraham ibn Ezra wrote prose in Middle Arabic and poetry in Biblical Hebrew. He thus adhered to the use of the two languages possibly established by Saadiah. When, however, Ibn Ezra began his travels in the Christian lands of Italy and France, he, like Ashkenazic Jews before and after Rashi, composed biblical commentaries in Rabbinic Hebrew. Moses Nahmanides' later employment of Rabbinic Hebrew in Bible commentaries written in Christian Spain could not help but convey the notion that what was expressed therein was no less normative than the normative statements about God, the world, and behavior originally expressed in that dialect in the post-70 C.E. era.

Meanwhile, Moses Maimonides, who normally wrote in Middle Arabic, had the audacity to produce the Mishneh Torah, a compendium of Jewish belief and practice, beginning with what one was to believe about God. He used a linguistic medium that, no less than the one chosen by Rashi, Ibn Ezra, and, later, Nahmanides for their biblical commentaries, said as much if not more than his book's contents. While these other authors adopted a language drawn primarily from post-Mishnaic eisegetical literature, Maimonides went back to the peculiar idiom of the Mishnah, Tosefta, and the normative statements attributed to Amoraim in the two Talmuds. Rashi and his disciples call this "Mishnah language." Maimonides thus conveyed the idea that his compendium was normative, like the Mishnah itself. He succeeded, for, whenever they agreed with him, the subsequent codes of halakah, such as the Tur and Shulhan Aruk, copied him verbatim.

The Languages of the Zohar

The collection of four distinct compositions commonly published and referred to as the Zohar exhibits three distinct dialects. First is the Hebrew found in the Hebrew parts of the *Midrash ha-Ne'elam*. This Hebrew, like the Hebrew of medieval Ashkenazic exegetical literature discussed above, imitates the Hebrew of the Rabbinic midrashic literature of late antiquity. In fact, it is a typically thirteenth century philosophical Hebrew of Spanish provenance.

The second, principal, language of the Zohar is the Aramaic of portions of the *Midrash ha-Ne'elam* and of the Zohar's main body. Its vocabulary combines the full gamut of the Aramaic dialects of the Rabbinic canon, from the Aramaic of Daniel and Ezra through the Galilean Aramaic of the Jerusalem Talmud and the Babylonian Aramaic of the Babylonian Talmud. However, the vocabulary and forms of the Babylonian Talmud and of the Aramaic translations of Scripture, which the Babylonian Talmud had declared canonical, predominate, for these were the Aramaic compositions that were the basis of Judaism in thirteenth century Spain. In the very same way that Rashi's Hebrew exhibits numerous expressions translated from French, so does the Zohar, like Nahmanides, exhibit numerous expressions derived from Spanish.

The third language of the Zohar is the Aramaic of the *Ra'aya Mehemna* and *Tiqqunim*, the two latest parts of this literature. The Aramaic of the body of the Zohar already existed as a model for the author(s) of these compositions. These compositions' Aramaic is however distinguished from that of the main body of the Zohar by the increased use of words borrowed from Spanish philosophical Hebrew and from Spanish itself.

In the same way that nineteenth century Christian Hebraists disparaged Mishnaic Hebrew as a corrupt form of Biblical Hebrew, so do rationalistic Judaic scholars of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries continue to justify their disparagement of medieval and modern Jewish mysticism by arguing that, based on poor knowledge of Semitic linguistics, the author(s) of the Zohar wrote bad Hebrew and worse Aramaic. Menahem Zevi Kaddari, *The Grammar of the Aramaic of the "Zohar"* (Jerusalem, 1971), points out that the author(s) of the Zohar "thought his thoughts in Hebrew and translated them—with a varying measure of success—into his peculiar, literary Aramaic."

This view, however, misses the genius of the Zohar's language. Among the interesting linguistic features of this created dialect are 1) the expression of the passive by the Hebrew *pu'al* and *nitpa'el*; 2) the expression of the passive of the intensive and causative forms of the verb by the *etpe'el*, which in ancient Babylonian Aramaic is used only as the passive of the *qal* (*pe'al*); and 3) the adoption from Biblical Aramaic of the internal passive conjugation *pe'il*. Indeed, contrary to views such at that of Kaddari, we might argue that the creation of the Zohar's artificial Aramaic dialect out of diverse sources is a mark of extreme sophistication, no less remarkable than the artificial dialect created by Canaanite scribes in the fourteenth century B.C.E. or Maimonides' use of the dialect of the Mishnah to compose a comprehensive presentation of the beliefs and obligations of Judaism.

What was the religious significance and purpose of the Zohar's language? Had the primary purpose been to create the impression that the work was from the pen of Simeon b. Yohai, the author could have followed Maimonides' lead and used the language of the Mishnah. Alternatively, he could have followed the lead of Ashkenazic exegetes, whom he knows well and whose views he incorporates, and written entirely in midrashic Hebrew. Had he wanted to be esoteric and historically authentic, he might have chosen to write in pure Galilean Aramaic. Indeed, lest it be supposed that the Zohar was written in Aramaic to make it esoteric, it should be noted that it successfully prescribed the addition of several Aramaic prayers to the common Jewish liturgy.

The Zohar's linguistic sophistication and literary erudition leave no doubt that its author was capable of following these paths. He chose instead to compose a work that shared with the Babylonian Talmud the use of an Aramaic dress or framework for Hebrew ideas. The message was that the

Zohar speaks with an authority equal to or even greater than that of the foundational book of Judaism, the Babylonian Talmud. Indeed, the Zohar was so successful in commanding this authority that the Shulhan Aruk, for example, frequently establishes the law as according with the Zohar against the Talmud, a remarkable feat.

Yiddish and Judeo-Arabic

While disagreeing regarding the precise time and place at which Yiddish became the common spoken language of Ashkenazic Jewry, historians agree that it is already attested by the middle of the thirteenth century C.E. At the onset of World War II an estimated eleven million persons regarded Yiddish as their native tongue. That figure accounts for slightly less than two thirds of the world Jewish population at the time.

Most of the remaining seven million Jews were represented by the Jews of Muslim countries, who continued to use Judeo-Arabic for both the study of Torah and mundane purposes, with Hebrew serving only as the language of the liturgy. Yemen represents an unusual Jewish culture, in which most males achieved fluency in reading, writing, and speaking Hebrew alongside Judeo-Arabic. Goitein[12] notes that the men composed and sang songs on religious themes in Hebrew, while the women composed and sang songs on secular themes in colloquial Arabic.

Aside from those who spoke and read Arabic, Yiddish, and Ladino, at the onset of World War II, there were Jews, mostly but not exclusively descendants of Jews whose native language was Yiddish or Spanish, who employed in the study of Torah Dutch, English, German, Hungarian, Russian, and other languages, including a variety of specifically Jewish Iranian dialects.

Late in the post-World War II era, the disparaging of Yiddish by both Jews and non-Jews finally was understood often to represent a disguised attack upon Judaism, the majority of whose adherents, annihilated by the Nazi death machine, had spoken Yiddish. This negative attitude towards Yiddish ignored the fact that Yiddish shares with English the essential characteristic—obvious to native speaker and stranger alike—that its primary vocabulary is made up of two distinct languages. These are Hebrew and Middle High German in the case of Yiddish, and Norman French and Anglo-Saxon in the case of English. Even so, until after World War II, when disparagement of things Jewish ceased to be considered polite, even many Yiddish speakers thought of Yiddish simply as a jargon composed of incorrect German with an admixture of Hebrew.

We have already seen that the charge that a particular written and spoken language is a jargon or a mistake has been leveled at other Jewish languages—Mishnaic Hebrew and Zoharic Aramaic—primarily for ideological reasons. In all fairness, this way of thinking has not been applied to Jewish languages alone. Until epigraphic archaeology revealed that New Testament Greek was simply the dialect spoken in the Middle East at the beginning of the Christian era, this Greek had long been perceived as a corrupt form of Attic Greek.

Other reasons also explain modern Jews' continuing belief that Yiddish is not really a language but only a jargon. Besides the close resemblance of most of Yiddish's non-Hebraic elements to standard German, the medieval notion survives that certain languages, principally Latin and Hebrew, are legitimate vehicles for the written communication of serious ideas, especially about religious subjects, while other languages are corrupt tongues employed by the unlettered. Early in modern times French, German, and English were admitted to the exclusive club of languages of high culture; Yiddish and many other languages of Central and Eastern Europe were admitted to this club only much later. Interestingly, as a result of such thinking, even when the Jews of liberal religious tendencies in Hungary abandoned Yiddish, they initially wrote about Jewish religious subjects in German, not wishing to exchange the uncultured Yiddish for uncultured Hungarian. Not surprisingly, both Yiddish and Modern Hebrew emerge as literary languages for *belles lettres* as well as for the writing of treatises about Jewish religious subjects precisely in conjunction

with the emergence of national literatures as an expression of national consciousness in the other minority languages of Central and Eastern Europe, such as Czech, Slovak, Serbian, Romanian (figs. 84–85).

However, long before the post-World War II era, when scholars writing about Jews and Judaism could not yet bring themselves to say "Yiddish" rather than Judeo-German, and long before learned treatises on Jewish religious subjects were composed in Yiddish, Jews throughout Central Europe to the borders of the Russian Empire (which did not admit Jews until the partitions of Poland in the eighteenth century) utilized Yiddish to transmit an oral translation of the Bible and as the language of the cultic act of Torah study at all levels. Consequently, Yiddish remained until the last three decades of the twentieth century the primary language of Torah study throughout the Jewish world.

Indeed, the study of Torah in other languages, such as English and Modern Hebrew, was long regarded as unsound both pedagogically and religiously. One unhealthy result of this use of Yiddish in advanced instruction in Orthodox institutions was the tendency of most American and Israeli Jews to identify the study of Torah with the negative stereotypes of Eastern Europe and the old *Yishuv*, with poverty and the failure to adopt the manners and norms of Western civilization. Even so, interestingly enough, part of the legacy of Yiddish as the main language of instruction in *yeshivot* for as many as 700 years is the fact that, while both Christians who earn doctorates in Judaic subjects in American universities and Israeli graduates of Orthodox high schools pronounce Biblical Hebrew with ultimate accent, as befits any proper Semitic language, including Modern Hebrew, they pronounce Rabbinic Hebrew with penultimate accent. This tradition derives from Yiddish, the sacred language of instruction in the pre-World War II *yeshivot* of Poland and Lithuania.

Among Yiddish-speaking Jewry it was customary for women in particular to recite non-liturgical prayers in Yiddish. Men, however, were expected by and large to satisfy their religious obligations by reciting the Hebrew liturgy, even though, for the majority of Yiddish-speaking Jewry, this was largely incomprehensible. It is indeed ironic how the disparagement of both Yiddish and women created for Yiddish-speaking women spiritual opportunities that the men denied themselves.

Ladino

In Christian Spain the term Ladino, a derivative of the terms *Latinus* and *latino*, which originally designated classical Latin, referred to Romance languages in general, as opposed to Arabic. Secondarily, the term Ladino referred to the refined form of Spanish employed for the translation of Scripture and liturgy. In the context of a Jewish language, spoken and written by Jews of the Ottoman Empire, Ladino designates a petrified fifteenth century Spanish written in Hebrew script and containing a significant component of Hebrew and Aramaic derived from Judaism's sacred canonical literature. Considering that, in 1492, the Jews of Spain were given the choice of converting to Christianity and remaining in Spain or stubbornly adhering to Judaism and leaving, Ladino came into being by virtue of a difficult and conscious decision in the realm of faith. The continued use of this language was a function of the self-definition of its speakers as a religious community.

The most popular work composed in Ladino was *Me'am Lo'ez*, a commentary on the Bible that interprets the Hebrew Scriptures in light of the entire corpus of Rabbinic and Kabbalistic literature. Begun by Jacob Culi (d. 1732), it was continued by other writers including the late nineteenth century Raphael Hiyya Pontremoli. Reading of this work individually or in groups was regarded as an act of piety. A Hebrew translation became very popular in modern Israel.

Judeo-Persian

Just as medieval Muslims in Arabic-speaking lands did not write Middle Arabic, so did Iranian Muslims not write their local dialects but rather a standard literary Persian. Consequently, so-called Judeo-Persian

represents, in fact, the writing down in Hebrew script of a variety of local dialects shared by Jews and non-Jews. Significant to the history of Judaism is the writing down in such dialects from the fourteenth century C.E. onward of 1) translations of Hebrew Scripture; 2) treatises on biblical lexicography, which attest to familiarity with the whole gamut of Rabbinic literature as well as the writings of Saadiah, Hai Gaon, Rashi, Abraham Ibn Ezra, and David Kimchi; 3) Jewish poetry on biblical themes. Outstanding authors of such poetry were fourteenth century Mawlana Shahin of Shiraz and sixteenth century Imrani of Shiraz.

Authors who wrote on aspects of Judaism in Tajiki, the Iranian dialect of Bukharan Jewry, included the eighteenth century Yusuf al-Yahudi and the nineteenth century Simon Hakham, who produced a monumental translation of the Bible. Another important Iranian Jewish dialect, which has yet to be adequately studied, is Judeo-Tat.[13]

The Case of Ethiopian Jewry

Just as for Rabbanite and Karaite Jews Hebrew was the holy language of Scripture and liturgy while a variety of languages—some of them specific to Jews—were employed both for the study of Torah and for mundane purposes, so did both the Jews of Ethiopia (prior to their arrival in the State of Israel) and the Christians of Ethiopia employ Ge'ez as the holy language of Scripture and liturgy while employing other languages, principally Amharic, the official modern language of Ethiopia, in both the expounding of Scripture and daily life. For a minority of Ethiopian Jews the spoken language was not Amharic but Tigriniya.

Since, however, the liturgy of the Beta Israel, or Jews of Ethiopia, includes passages in Agau, which, unlike South Semitic Ge'ez, Amharic, and Tigriniya, is an Hamitic language, it has been surmised that Agau, the spoken language of Beta Israel residing in Quara and Semyen, may have preceded Ge'ez as the liturgical or sacred language of Ethiopian Jewry.

The traditional Sabbath worship of the Beta Israel includes the reading of the Pentateuch in Ge'ez followed by its explanation in Amharic. Obviously, this practice corresponds to the reading of the Torah in Hebrew followed verse by verse by translation into Aramaic or Greek, attested in M. Meg. 1:8.

Other Jewish Languages

In addition to Hebrew, Aramaic, Arabic, Yiddish, and Ladino, the Jews created numerous other languages characterized by Hebrew and Aramaic elements and the use of Hebrew script. Among these were Judeo-Provençal and Judeo-Catalan. An interesting case is the Neo-Aramaic dialect of the Jews of Kurdistan, who call their vernacular "Targum." This name recognizes this tongue as a form of the language of the Babylonian Talmud's official Aramaic translations of Scripture, called in Aramaic "Targum," meaning "translation." Judeo-Greek writings included translations of Hebrew Scripture and liturgical poetry, while Judeo-Italian writings included dictionaries, translations of the Bible, the prayer book, Maimonides' *Guide of the Perplexed*, a thirteenth century Lamentation for the Ninth of Av and a Hymn in Honor of Queen Sabbath by the sixteenth century Kabbalist, Mordecai b. Judah Dato. A special instance of a Jewish dialect that, because it was never committed to writing by its native speakers, did not utilize the Hebrew alphabet is Judeo-Berber, spoken in the Atlas Mountains of Morocco. Like other Jewish languages, it was used to interpret the sacred texts of Judaism for the masses of Jews for whom Hebrew was largely incomprehensible.

Reform Judaism and the State of Israel

For the first time in many centuries, emancipation, or the promise of it, enabled Jews throughout Europe to participate in what many Jews and most Christians perceived as a higher culture. In Protestant countries where church services were conducted in the vernacular, traditional Jewish religious services conducted in Hebrew with some

Aramaic elements seemed to typify Judaism's belonging to a bygone era. Protestantism's liturgy, said and sung in the vernacular, seemed to form a spiritual ladder to heaven; the liturgy of the synagogue, in both script and language increasingly foreign to emancipated Jews, seemed a veritable barrier to spirituality. While the introduction of vernacular sermons and choral and instrumental music characterized many synagogues throughout nineteenth century Europe, the singing of liturgy and Scripture in the traditional Hebrew and Aramaic did not appear problematic in those countries in which the Roman Catholic or Eastern Orthodox majority shared with the Jews the singing of liturgies and the reading of Scripture in dead languages, such as Church Latin and Church Slavonic, which most people did not understand.

Understandably, then, Reform Judaism's commitment from its inception to public worship partly or largely in the vernacular was especially appealing in those places in which the vernacular was employed in churches of the host culture and in which Jewish children and adults had little or no knowledge of either the Hebrew alphabet or language. Not surprisingly, Reform Judaism spread most rapidly in areas such as the American mid-West, South, and far-West, far removed from major aggregates of Jews able to establish schools for the teaching of Hebrew. Early on, Reformers found justification for reciting the liturgy in the vernacular in M. Sot. 7:1, which sanctions recitation of the basic synagogue prayers, the *Shema* and *Tefillah*, "in any language." By contrast, Zechariah Frankel, the putative founder of Conservative Judaism, argued that the public recitation of the liturgy in a language other than Hebrew effectively cut off synagogue attendees from the original language(s) of the canonical literature of Judaism.

By the middle of the twentieth century the typical American Jewish community outside of major population centers had two synagogues, an Orthodox one attended primarily by members of the immigrant generation, who retained some rudimentary knowledge of Hebrew script, enabling them to follow the services without very much comprehension, and a Reform synagogue in which the services were conducted largely in English with a few Hebrew prayers read by the rabbi, who was often the only one present who could decipher Hebrew script. Any reasonable visitor might have found it utterly hopeless that the younger generation in either of these synagogues would ever learn enough to understand even the minimal amount of Hebrew read in the Reform setting.

Three things changed this: 1) The new State of Israel transformed Hebrew from a dead language to the living language of a modern country whose emergence and survival were perceived as miraculous. Overnight the study of Hebrew was seen as only slightly more astonishing than the study of French or Spanish. 2) The Conservative movement in American Judaism, followed later by other Jewish movements, organized summer camps at which children and teenagers learned to sing the traditional liturgy in Hebrew, study Rabbinic literature in Hebrew and Aramaic, and speak modern Hebrew as a living language. Back home these children helped for a time to transform Conservative Judaism into the most dynamic movement in American Jewry, some of them becoming rabbis and Judaic scholars in America and Israel. 3) Modern Orthodoxy, eventually followed by the other movements, created a network of private schools that combined teaching and practice of Judaism, the study of the classic texts of Judaism in Hebrew and Aramaic, the standard curriculum of the public schools, and modern Hebrew as a language of instruction taught by native speakers.

In due course even the right wing Orthodox began to understand that the use of Hebrew as the native speech of Israelis made both the synagogue and the study of the classic religious documents of Judaism universally accessible to the inhabitants of the State of Israel. One consequence of these developments in American and Israeli Judaism is that at the close of the millennium, American and Israeli Jews of every political and religious bent cross seas and continents to teach the Hebrew alphabet (the Mishnah's "Assyrian script"), the Hebrew language, and the sacred texts of Judaism

to Jews who had no inkling of the existence of these things but a few years before. Notwithstanding the precarious existence of the State of Israel and a 50% rate of intermarriage in the diaspora, many Jews at the end of the twentieth century see in the rebirth of Hebrew as the official language of a Jewish state whose capital is Jerusalem a clear replication of Judaism's paradigm of Exile and Redemption. This provides a great impetus to learn and teach the Rabbinic canon. After almost two thousand years, M. Sot. and M. Meg. seem to have succeeded in their long term investment in "the holy tongue."

Conclusion

Epigraphic archaeology indicates that when Rabbinic Judaism came into being in the first century C.E., the Jews of Palestine employed in everyday life both Greek and Aramaic and to a much lesser extant a Hebrew dialect now designated Middle Hebrew. It was widely believed by Jews in the Hellenistic and Roman world that Greek, no less than Hebrew, was a language of divine revelation, because, according to a widely propagated legend, the Old Greek translation of the Pentateuch was no less God-given than was the Hebrew version said to have been dictated by God to Moses. Nevertheless, the seminal document of Rabbinic Judaism dared to declare Hebrew—i.e., the disparate Hebrew dialects of Hebrew Scripture, of the liturgy inherited from the Second Temple and elaborated upon by the rabbis, and the Middle Hebrew in which Bar Kokhba had corresponded and in which Judah the Patriarch composed the Mishnah—to be collectively "the holy tongue."

Judah and his disciples succeeded in making Hebrew the language of all authoritative statements about Judaism for almost two millennia. Their success rested, no doubt, on the good fortune that, in Palestine, a substantial group of Jews already spoke Middle Hebrew. Additionally, the claim that Hebrew was *the* holy tongue derived its credibility from the fact that, in this language, God had created the universe and talked to Moses and the prophets.

Hebrew survived as a sacred language of prayer and the reading of sacred texts at least in part because, for almost two millennia, most Jews lived in environments in which their gentile neighbors also prayed and read Scriptures in holy languages (Latin, Church Slavonic, Classical Arabic) that were not spoken in everyday life. What Jews did mirrored in some ways what everyone did.

However almost miraculously, the shift that occurred in other cultures did not take place in Judaism. For in about the middle of the twentieth century, when most Jews found themselves in a world in which other peoples prayed and read Scriptures in modern spoken languages, Hebrew itself was reemployed as the language of a modern state. Suddenly, the study of Hebrew seemed to be more analogous to the study of French, German, or Spanish than to the study of Latin and Greek. In fact, this outward secularity masked Hebrew's continuing theological significance. The State of Israel was perceived by Jews and many gentiles as an aspect of God's long-awaited redemption. Consequently, the revival of Hebrew as the official language of the state was viewed as part and parcel of the return of the Jews to the Holy Land, as a harbinger of the messianic age.

At the end of the second millennium, Jews the world over see study and teaching of Hebrew as an aspect of finding their roots and achieving a level of spirituality. So Hebrew continues to have the value the Talmudic rabbis achieved for it, a value it would not have had they taken the easier paths of adopting Greek or Aramaic as the language of liturgy, Scripture, and religious discourse.

Mayer Gruber

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Notes

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[8] See M. Steinschneider, "Introduction to the Arabic Literature of the Jews," *JQR* (old series), 12 [1900], pp. 312–313.
[9] Menahem Banitt, "Une langue fantome: le judéo-français," in *Revue de linguistiqueromane* 27 (1963), pp. 245–294.
[10] Op. cit., p. 10, n. 18; cf. p. 4, n. 14.
[11] Op. cit., p. 131.
[12] S.D. Goitein, "Women as Creators of Biblical Genres," in *Prooftexts* 8 (1988), pp. 1–8.
[13] Herbert Paper, ed., *Jewish Languages, Theme and Variations* (Cambridge, 1978).

Leviticus in Judaism: Scripture and Halakhah in Leviticus

The book of Leviticus is mediated to Judaism by two Rabbinic readings of Scripture. The first, Sifra, ca. 300 C.E., asks about the relationship of the laws of the Mishnah and the Tosefta to the teachings of Scripture. The second, Leviticus Rabbah, ca. 450–500 C.E., forms of selected passages of Leviticus, read in light of other passages of Scripture altogether, large propositional expositions. Here we consider only the relationship of Scripture and Halakhah in Leviticus.

Sifra, a compilation of Midrash-exegeses on the book of Leviticus, forms a massive and systematic statement concerning the definition of the Mishnah in relationship to Scripture. The authorship of Sifra produced a document that coheres not only in its main formal and logical traits but also in its few governing demonstrations. Sifra is unitary, coherent, and purposive, start to finish, and in no way a random sample of we know not what. The authorship of Sifra composed the one document to accomplish the union of the two Torahs, Scripture, or the written Torah, and the Mishnah, or the oral Torah. This was achieved not merely formally by provision of proof texts from Scripture for statements of the Mishnah—as in the two Talmuds—but through a profound analysis of the interior structure of thought. It was by means of the critique of practical logic and the rehabilitation of the probative logic of hierarchical classification (accomplished through the form of *Listenwissenschaft*) in particular that the authorship of Sifra accomplished this remarkable feat of intellect. That authorship achieved the (re-)union of the two Torahs into a single cogent statement within the framework of the written Torah by penetrating into the deep composition of logic that underlay the creation of the world in its correct components, rightly classified, and in its right order, as portrayed by the Torah.

This was done in two ways. Specifically, it involved, first of all, systematically demolishing the logic that sustains an autonomous Mishnah, which appeals to the intrinsic traits of things to accomplish classification and hierarchization. Second, it was done by demonstrating the dependency, for the identification of the correct classification of things, not upon the traits of things viewed in the abstract but upon the classification of things by Scripture in particular. The framers of Sifra recast the two parts of the Torah into a single coherent statement through unitary and cogent discourse. So in choosing, as to structure, a book of the Pentateuch, and, as to form, the exegetical form involving paraphrase and amplification of a phrase of a base-text of Scripture, the authorship of Sifra made its entire statement *in nuce*. Then by composing a document that for very long stretches simply cannot have been put together without the Mishnah and at the same time subjecting the generative logical principles of the Mishnah to devastating critique, that same authorship took up its position. The destruction of the Mishnah as an autonomous and freestanding

statement, based upon its own logic, is followed by the reconstruction of (large tracts of the Mishnah) as a statement wholly within, and in accord with, the logic and program of the written Torah in Leviticus. That is what defines Sifra, the one genuinely cogent and sustained statement among the four Midrash-compilations that present exegetical discourse on the Pentateuch.

The dominant approach to uniting the two Torahs, oral and written, into a single cogent statement, involved reading the written Torah into the oral. In form, this was done through inserting into the Mishnah (that is, the oral Torah) a long sequence of proof texts. The other solution required reading the oral Torah into the written one, by inserting into the written Torah citations and allusions to the oral one, and, as a matter of fact, also by demonstrating, on both philosophical and theological grounds, the utter subordination and dependency of the oral Torah, the Mishnah, to the written Torah—while at the same time defending and vindicating that same oral Torah. Sifra, followed unsystematically to be sure by the two Sifres, did just that. Sifra's authorship attempted to set forth the dual Torah as a single, cogent statement, doing so by reading the Mishnah into Scripture not merely for proposition but for expression of proposition. On the surface that decision represented a literary, not merely a theological, judgment. But within the deep structure of thought, it was far more than a mere matter of how to select and organize propositions.

That judgment upon the Mishnah forms part of the polemic of Sifra's authorship—but only part of it. Sifra's authorship conducts a sustained polemic against the failure of the Mishnah to cite Scripture very much or systematically to link its ideas to Scripture through the medium of formal demonstration by exegesis. Sifra's rhetorical exegesis follows a standard redactional form. Scripture will be cited. Then a statement will be made about its meaning, or a statement of law correlative to that Scripture will be given. That statement sometimes cites the Mishnah, often verbatim. Finally, the author of Sifra invariably states, "Now is that not (merely) logical?" And the point of that statement will be, Can this position not be gained through the working of mere logic, based upon facts supplied (to be sure) by Scripture?

The polemical power of Sifra lies in its repetitive demonstration that the stated position, citation of a Mishnah-pericope, is not only not the product of logic, but is, and only can be, the product of exegesis of Scripture. That is only part of the matter, as I shall explain, but that component of the larger judgment of Sifra's authorship does make the point that the Mishnah is subordinated to Scripture and validated only through Scripture. In that regard, the authorship of Sifra stands at one with the position of the authorships of the other successor-writings, even though Sifra's writers carried to a much more profound level of thought the critique of the Mishnah. They did so by rethinking the logical foundations of the entire Torah.

The framers of the Mishnah effect their taxonomy through the traits of things. The authorship of Sifra insists that the source of classification is Scripture. Sifra's authorship time and again demonstrates that classification without Scripture's data cannot be carried out without Scripture's taxonomic givens, and, it must follow, hierarchical arguments based on extra-scriptural taxa always fail. In the Mishnah we seek connection between fact and fact, sentence and sentence, by comparing and contrasting two things that are like and not alike. At the logical level the Mishnah falls into the category of familiar philosophical thought. Once we seek regularities, we propose rules. What is like another thing falls under its rule, and what is not like the other falls under the opposite rule. Accordingly, as to the species of the genus, so far as they are alike, they share the same rule. So far as they are not alike, each follows a rule contrary to that governing the other.

So the work of analysis is what produces connection, and therefore the drawing of conclusions derives from comparison and contrast in the syllogism, 1 + 1 = 2—the *and*, the *equal*. The proposition then that forms the conclusion concerns the essential likeness of the two offices, except where they are different, but the subterranean premise is that we can explain both likeness

and difference by appeal to a principle of fundamental order and unity. To make these observations concrete, we shall examine numerous examples of how Sifra's authorship rejects the principles of the logic of hierarchical classification*as these are worked out by the framers of the Mishnah*. It is a critique of designating classifications of things without Scriptural warrant. The critique applies to the way in which a shared logic is worked out by the other authorship. For it is not the principle that like things follow the same rule, unlike things, the opposite rule, that is at stake. Nor is the principle of hierarchical classification embodied in the argument *a fortiori* at issue. What our authorship disputes is that we can classify things on our own by appeal to the traits or indicative characteristics, that is, utterly without reference to Scripture. The argument is simple. On our own, we cannot classify species into genera. Everything is different from everything else in some way. But Scripture tells us what things are like what other things for what purposes, hence Scripture imposes on things the definitive classifications, that and not traits we discern in the things themselves. When we see the nature of the critique, we shall have a clear picture of what is at stake when we examine, in some detail, precisely how the Mishnah's logic does its work.

In Sifra no one denies the principle of hierarchical classification. That is an established fact, a self-evident trait of mind. The argument of Sifra's authorship is that, by themselves, things do not possess traits that permit us finally to classify species into a common genus. There always are traits distinctive to a classification. Accordingly, it is the argument of Sifra's authorship that without the revelation of the Torah, we are not able to effect any classification at all, are left, that is to say, only with species, no genus, only with cases, no rules. The thrust of Sifra's authorship's attack on the Mishnah's taxonomic logic is readily discerned. Time and again, we can easily demonstrate, things have so many and such diverse and contradictory indicative traits that, comparing one thing to something else, we can always distinguish one species from another. Even though we find something in common, we also can discern some other trait characteristic of one thing but not the other. Consequently, we also can show that the hierarchical logic on which we rely, the argument *a fortiori* or *qol vehomer*, will not serve. For if on the basis of one set of traits that yield a given classification, we place into hierarchical order two or more items, on the basis of a different set of traits, we have either a different classification altogether, or, much more commonly, simply a different hierarchy. So the attack on the way in which the Mishnah's authorship has done its work appeals not merely to the limitations of classification solely on the basis of traits of things. The more telling argument addresses what is, to *Listenwissenschaft*, the source of power and compelling proof: hierarchization. That is why, throughout, we must designate the Mishnah's mode of *Listenwissenschaft* a logic of hierarchical classification. Things are not merely like or unlike, therefore following one rule or its opposite. Things also are weightier or less weighty, and that particular point of likeness of difference generates the logical force of *Listenwissenschaft*.

Sifra's authorship repeatedly demonstrates that the formation of classifications based on monothetic taxonomy. What that means is this: traits that are not only common to both items but that are shared throughout both of the items subject to comparison and contrast, simply will not serve. These shared traits are supposed to prove that the items that are compared are alike, and therefore should be subjected to the same rule. But the allegation of comparability proves flawed. The proposition maintains that the two items are alike, because they share one trait in common (thus: "monothetic taxonomy"). But I shall show you that they also exhibit traits that are different for the respective items. Then we have both likeness and difference.

Then, the argument proceeds, at every point at which someone alleges uniform, that is to say, monothetic likeness, Sifra's authorship will demonstrate difference. Then how to proceed? Appeal to some shared traits as a basis for classification: this is not like that, and that is not like this, but the indicative trait that both exhibit is such and

so, that is to say, polythetic taxonomy. The self-evident problem in accepting differences among things and insisting, nonetheless, on their monomorphic character for purposes of comparison and contrast, cannot be set aside: who says? That is, if I can adduce in evidence for a shared classification of things only a few traits among many characteristic of each thing, then what stops me from treating all things alike? Polythetic taxonomy opens the way to an unlimited exercise in finding what diverse things have in common and imposing, for that reason, one rule on everything. Then the very working of *Listenwissenschaft* as a tool of analysis, differentiation, comparison, contrast, and the descriptive determination of rules yields the opposite of what is desired. Chaos, not order, a mass of exceptions, no rules, a world of examples, each subject to its own regulation, instead of a world of order and proportion, composition and stability, will result. Sifra's authorship affirms taxonomic logic when applied to the right categories. It systematically demonstrates the affirmative case, that *Listenwissenschaft* is a self-evidently valid mode of demonstrating the truth of propositions. But *the* source of the correct classification of things is Scripture and only Scripture. Without Scripture's intervention into the taxonomy of the world, we should have no knowledge at all of which things fall into which classifications and therefore are governed by which rules.

While setting forth its critique of the Mishnah's utilization of the logic of comparison and contrast in hierarchical classification, the authorship of Sifra is careful not to criticize the Mishnah. Its position favors restating the Mishnah within the context of Scripture, not rejecting the conclusions of the Mishnah, let alone its authority. Consequently, when we find a critique of applied reason divorced from Scripture, we rarely uncover an explicit critique of the Mishnah, and when we find a citation of the Mishnah, we rarely uncover linkage to the ubiquitous principle that Scripture forms the source of all classification and hierarchy. When the Mishnah is cited by our authorship, it will be presented as part of the factual substrate of the Torah. When the logic operative throughout the Mishnah is subjected to criticism, the language of the Mishnah will rarely, if ever, be cited in context. The operative language in dealing with the critique of the applied logic of *Listenwissenschaft* as represented by the framers of the Mishnah ordinarily is, "is it not a matter of logic?" Then the sorts of arguments against taxonomy pursued outside of the framework of Scripture's classifications will follow. When, by contrast, the authorship of Sifra wishes to introduce into the context it has already established a verbatim passage of the Mishnah, it will ordinarily, though not always, use, *mikan amru*, which, in context, means, "in this connection [sages] have said." It is a simple fact that when the intent is to demolish improper reasoning, the Mishnah's rules in the Mishnah's language rarely, if ever, occur. When the authorship of Sifra wishes to incorporate paragraphs of the Mishnah into their re-presentation of the Torah, they do so either without fanfare, as in the passage at hand, or by the neutral joining-language "in this connection [sages] have said."

The authorship of Sifra never called into question the self-evident validity of taxonomic logic. Its critique is addressed only to how the Mishnah's framers identify the origins of, and delineate, taxa. But that critique proves fundamental to the case that that authorship proposed to make. For, intending to demonstrate that *The Torah* was a proper noun, and that everything that was valid came to expression in the single, cogent statement of The Torah, the authorship at hand identified the fundamental issue. It is the debate over the way we know things. In insisting, in agreement with the framers of the Mishnah, that there are not only cases but also rules, not only species but also genera, the authorship of Sifra also made its case in behalf of the case for The Torah as a proper noun. This carries us to the theological foundation for Sifra's authorship's sustained critique of applied reason.

At stake is the character of The Torah. I may phrase the question in this way: exactly what do we want to learn from, or discern within The Torah? And the answer to that question requires theological, not merely literary and philosophical, reflection on our part. For in their delineation of correct

hierarchical logic, our authorship uncovered within The Torah (hence by definition, written and oral components of The Torah alike) an adumbration of the working of the mind of God. That is because the premise of all discourse is that The Torah was written by God and dictated by God to Moses at Sinai. And that will in the end explain why our authorship for its part has entered into The Torah long passages of not merely clarification but active intrusion, making itself a component of the interlocutorial process. To what end we know: it was to unite the dual Torah. The authorship of Sifra proposed to regain access to the modes of thought that guided the formation of the Torah, oral and written alike: comparison and contrast in this way, not in that, identification of categories in one manner, not in another. Since those were the modes of thought that, in our authorship's conception, dictated the structure of intellect upon which the Torah, the united Torah, rested, a simple conclusion is the sole possible one.

In their analysis of the deepest structures of intellect of the Torah, the authorship of Sifra presumed to enter into the mind of God, showing how God's mind worked when God formed the Torah, written and oral alike. And there, in the intellect of God, in their judgment humanity gained access to the only means of uniting the Torah, because that is where the Torah originated. But in discerning how God's mind worked, the intellectuals who created Sifra claimed for themselves a place in that very process of thought that had given birth to The Torah. Our authorship could rewrite the Torah because, knowing how The Torah originally was written, they too could write (though not reveal) The Torah.

Three forms dictate the entire rhetorical repertoire of this document. The first, the dialectical, is the demonstration that if we wish to classify things, we must follow the taxa dictated by Scripture rather than relying solely upon the traits of the things we wish to classify. The second, the citation-form, invokes the citation of passages of the Mishnah or the Tosefta in the setting of Scripture. The third is commentary form, in which a phrase of Scripture is followed by an amplificatory clause of some sort. The forms of the document admirably expressed the polemical purpose of the authorship at hand. What they wished to prove was that a taxonomy resting on the traits of things without reference to Scripture's classifications cannot serve. They further wished to restate the oral Torah in the setting of the written Torah. And, finally, they wished to accomplish the whole by rewriting the written Torah. The dialectical form accomplishes the first purpose, the citation-form the second, and the commentary form the third.

In the simple commentary form a verse, or an element of a verse, is cited, and then a very few words explain the meaning of that verse. Second come the complex forms, in which a simple exegesis is augmented in some important way, commonly by questions and answers, so that we have more than simply a verse and a brief exposition of its elements or of its meaning as a whole. The authorship of the Sifra time and again wishes to show that prior documents, the Mishnah or Tosefta, cited verbatim (here given in italics), require the support of exegesis of Scripture for important propositions, presented in the Mishnah and the Tosefta not on the foundation of exegetical proof at all. In the main, moreover, the authorship of Sifra tends not to attribute its materials to specific authorities, and most of the pericopae containing attributions are shared with Mishnah and Tosefta. As we should expect, just as in Mekhilta Attributed to R. Ishmael, Sifra contains a fair sample of pericopae which do not make use of the forms common in the exegesis of specific Scriptural verses and, mostly do not pretend to explain the meaning of verses, but rather resort to forms typical of Mishnah and Tosefta. When Sifra uses forms other than those in which its exegeses are routinely phrased, it commonly, though not always, draws upon materials also found in Mishnah and Tosefta. It is uncommon for Sifra to make use of non-exegetical forms for materials peculiar to its compilation. To state matters simply, Sifra quotes Mishnah or Tosefta, but its own materials follow its distinctive, exegetical forms.

Topical Program

As we realize, for its topical program the authorship of Sifra takes the book of Leviticus. For propositions Sifra's authorship presents episodic and ad hoc sentences. If we ask how these sentences form propositions other than amplifications of points made in the book of Leviticus itself, and how we may restate those propositions in a coherent way, nothing sustained and coherent emerges. Sifra does not constitute a propositional document transcending its precipitating text. But, as we have now seen in detail, that in no way bears the implication that the document's authorship merely collected and arranged this and that about the book of Leviticus. For three reasons, we must conclude that Sifra does not set forth propositions in the way in which the Rabbah-compilations and Sifre to Deuteronomy do.

First, in general there is no topical program distinct from that of Scripture. Sifra remains wholly within Scripture's orbit and range of discourse, proposing only to expand and clarify what it found within Scripture. Where the authorship moves beyond Scripture, it is not toward fresh theological or philosophical thought, but rather to a quite different set of issues altogether, concerning Mishnah and Tosefta. When we describe the topical program of the document, the blatant and definitive trait of Sifra is simple: the topical program and order derive from Scripture. Just as the Mishnah defines the topical program and order for Tosefta, the Yerushalmi, and the Bavli, so Scripture does so for Sifra. It follows that Sifra takes as its structure the plan and program of the written Torah, by contrast to the decision of the framers or compilers of Tosefta and the two Talmuds.

Second, for sizable passages, the sole point of coherence for the discrete sentences or paragraphs of Sifra's authorship derives from the base-verse of Scripture that is subject to commentary. That fact corresponds to the results of form-analysis and the description of the logics of cogent discourse. While, as we have noted, the Mishnah holds thought together through propositions of various kinds, with special interest in demonstrating propositions through a well-crafted program of logic of a certain kind, Sifra's authorship appeals to a different logic altogether. It is one that I have set forth as fixed-associative discourse. That is not a propositional logic—by definition.

The third fundamental observation draws attention to the paramount position, within this restatement of the written Torah, of the oral Torah. We may say very simply that, in a purely formal and superficial sense, a sizable proportion of Sifra consists in the association of completed statements of the oral Torah with the exposition of the written Torah, the whole *re*-presenting as one whole Torah the dual Torah received by Moses at Sinai (speaking within the Torah-myth). Even at the very surface we observe a simple fact. Without the Mishnah or the Tosefta, our authorship will have had virtually nothing to say about one passage after another of the written Torah. Far more often than citing the Mishnah or the Tosefta verbatim, our authorship cites principles of law or theology fundamental to the Mishnah's treatment of a given topic, even when the particular passage of the Mishnah or the Tosefta that sets forth those principles is not cited verbatim.

It follows that the three basic and definitive topical traits of Sifra, are, first, its total adherence to the topical program of the written Torah for order and plan; second, its very common reliance upon the phrases or verses of the written Torah for the joining into coherent discourse of discrete thoughts, e.g., comments on, or amplifications of, words or phrases; and third, its equally profound dependence upon the oral Torah for its program of thought: the problematic that defines the issues the authorship wishes to explore and resolve.

That brings us to the positive side of the picture. While Sifra in detail presents no paramount propositions, it demonstrates a highly-distinctive and vigorously-demonstrated proposition. We should drastically misunderstand the document if the miscellaneous character of the parts obscured the powerful statement made by the whole. For while in detail we cannot reconstruct a topical program other than that of Scripture, viewed

in its indicative and definitive traits of rhetoric, logic, and implicit proposition, Sifra does take up a well-composed position on a fundamental issue, namely, the relationship between the written Torah, represented by the book of Leviticus, and the oral Torah, represented by the passages of the Mishnah deemed by the authorship of Sifra to be pertinent to the book of Leviticus. Sifra joins the two Torahs into a single statement, accomplishing a re-presentation of the written Torah in topic and in program and in the logic of cogent discourse, and within that rewriting of the written Torah, a re-presentation of the oral Torah in its paramount problematic and in many of its substantive propositions. What we now wish to find out is what parts of the document bear that burden, and in what proportion; and what the other parts of the document, besides those particular to the document itself, propose to contribute.

Sifra's authorship affirms taxonomic logic when applied to the right categories. It systematically demonstrates the affirmative case, that *Listenwissenschaft* is a self-evidently valid mode of demonstrating the truth of propositions. But *the* source of the correct classification of things is Scripture and only Scripture. Without Scripture's intervention into the taxonomy of the world, we should have no knowledge at all of which things fall into which classifications and therefore are governed by which rules. How then do we appeal to Scripture to designate the operative classifications? Here is a simple example of the alternative mode of classification, one that does not appeal to the traits of things but to the utilization of names by Scripture. What we see is how by naming things in one way, rather than in another, Scripture orders all things, classifying and, in the nature of things, also hierarchizing them. Here is one example among many of how our authorship conceives the right way of logical thought to proceed:

> Parashat Vayyiqra Dibura Denedabah
> Parashah 4
> VII:V.
> 1.A. ". . . and Aaron's sons the priests shall present the blood and throw the blood [round about against the altar that is at the door of the tent of meeting]:"
> B. Why does Scripture make use of the word "blood" twice [instead of using a pronoun]?
> C. [It is for the following purpose:] How on the basis of Scripture do you know that if blood deriving from one burnt offering was confused with blood deriving from another burnt offering, blood deriving from one burnt offering with blood deriving from a beast that has been substituted therefor, blood deriving from a burnt offering with blood deriving from an unconsecrated beast, the mixture should nonetheless be presented?
> D. It is because Scripture makes use of the word "blood" twice [instead of using a pronoun].
> 2.A. Is it possible to suppose that while if blood deriving from beasts in the specified classifications, [the blood of the sacrifice] is to be presented [on the altar, as a valid offering], for the simple reason that if the several beasts while alive had been confused with one another, they might be offered up,
> B. but how do we know that even if the blood of a burnt offering were confused with that of a beast killed as a guilt offering [it is to be offered up]?
> C. I shall concede the case of the mixture of the blood of a burnt offering confused with that of a beast killed as a guilt offering; it is to be presented, for both this one and that one fall into the classification of Most Holy Things.
> D. But how do I know that if the blood of a burnt offering were confused with the blood of a beast slaughtered in the classification of peace-offerings or of a thanksgiving offering [the mixture is to be presented]?
> E. I shall concede the case of the mixture of the blood of a burnt offering confused with that of a beast slaughtered in the classification of peace-offerings or of a thanksgiving offering [it is to be presented], because the beasts in both classifications produce blood that has to be sprinkled four times.
> F. But how do I know that if the blood of a burnt offering were confused with the blood of a beast slaughtered in the classification of a firstling or a beast that was counted as the tenth [that is, it is to serve as the tithe of that herd or flock] or of a beast designated as a passover [it is to be presented]?
> G. I shall concede the case of the mixture of the blood of a burnt offering confused with that of a beast slaughtered

in the classification of firstling or a beast that was counted as a tenth or of a beast designated as a passover [it is to be presented], because Scripture uses the word "blood" two times.

H. Then while I may make that concession, might I also suppose that if the blood of a burnt offering was confused with the blood of beasts that had suffered an invalidation, it also may be offered up?

I. Scripture says, ". . . its blood" [thus excluding such a case].

J. Then I shall concede the case of a mixture of the blood of a valid burnt offering with the blood of beasts that had suffered an invalidation, which blood is not valid to be presented at all.

K. But how do I know that if such blood were mixed with the blood deriving from beasts set aside as sin-offerings to be offered on the inner altar [it is not to be offered up]?

L. I can concede that the blood of a burnt offering that has been mixed with the blood deriving from beasts set aside as sin-offerings to be offered on the inner altar is not to be offered up, for the one is offered on the inner altar, and the other on the outer altar [the burnt offering brought as a free will offering, under discussion here, is slaughtered at the altar ". . . that is at the door of the tent of meeting," not at the inner altar].

M. But how do I know that even if the blood of a burnt offering was confused with the blood of sin-offerings that are to be slaughtered at the outer altar, it is not to be offered up?

N. Scripture says, ". . . its blood" [thus excluding such a case].

In place of the rejecting of arguments resting on classifying species into a common genus, we now demonstrate how classification really is to be carried on. It is through the imposition upon data of the categories dictated by Scripture: Scripture's use of language. That is the force of this powerful exercise. No. 1 sets the stage, simply pointing out that the use of the word "blood" twice encompasses a case in which blood in two distinct classifications is somehow confused in the process of the conduct of the cult. In such a case it is quite proper to pour out the mixture of blood deriving from distinct sources, e.g., beasts that have served different, but comparable purposes. We then systemically work out the limits of that rule, showing how comparability works, then pointing to cases in which comparability is set aside. Throughout the exposition, at the crucial point we invoke the formulation of Scripture, subordinating logic or in our instance the process of classification of like species to the dictation of Scripture. I cannot imagine a more successful demonstration of what the framers wish to say.

The reason for Scripture's unique power of classification is the possibility of polythetic classification that only Scripture makes possible. Because of Scripture's provision of taxa, we are able to undertake the science of *Listenwissenschaft*, including hierarchical classification, in the right way. What can we do because we appeal to Scripture, which we cannot do if we do not rely on Scripture? It is to establish the possibility of polythetic classification. We can appeal to shared traits of otherwise distinct taxa and so transform species into a common genus for a given purpose. Only Scripture makes that initiative feasible, so our authorship maintains. What is at stake? It is the possibility of doing precisely what the framers of the Mishnah wish to do. That is to join together masses of diverse data into a single, encompassing statement, to show the rule that inheres in diverse cases. In what follows, we shall see an enormous, coherent, and beautifully articulated exercise in the comparison and contrast of many things of a single genus. The whole holds together, because Scripture makes possible the statement of all things within a single rule. That is, as we have noted, precisely what the framers of the Mishnah proposed to accomplish. Our authorship maintains that only by appeal to The Torah is this fete of learning possible. If, then, we wish to understand all things all together and all at once under a single encompassing rule, we had best revert to The Torah, with its account of the rightful names, positions, and order, imputed to all things.

PARASHAT VAYYIQRA DIBURA DENEDABAH
PARASHAH 11
XXII:I.

1.A. [With reference to M. Men. 5:5:] There are those [offerings that require bringing near but do not require waving, waving but not bringing near,

waving and bringing near, neither waving nor bringing near: These are offering that require bringing near but do not require waving: the meal offering of fine flour and the meal offering prepared in the baking pan and the meal offering prepared in the frying pan, and the meal offering of cakes and the meal offering of wafers, and the meal offering of priests, and the meal offering of an anointed priest, and the meal offering of gentiles, and the meal offering of women, and the meal offering of a sinner. R. Simeon says, "The meal offering of priests and of the anointed priest—bringing near does not apply to them, because the taking of a handful does not apply to them. And whatever is not subject to the taking of a handful is not subject to bringing near,"] [Scripture] says, "When you present to the Lord a meal offering that is made in any of these ways, it shall be brought [to the priest who shall take it up to the altar]:"

B. What requires bringing near is only the handful. How do I know that I should encompass under the rule of bringing near the meal offering?
C. Scripture says explicitly, "meal offering."
D. How do I know that I should encompass all meal offerings?
E. Scripture says, using the accusative particle, "the meal offering."

2.A. I might propose that what requires bringing near is solely the meal offering brought as a free will offering.
B. How do I know that the rule encompasses an obligatory meal offering?
C. It is a matter of logic.
D. Bringing a meal offering as a free will offering and bringing a meal offering as a matter of obligation form a single classification. Just as a meal offering presented as a free will offering requires bringing near, so the same rule applies to a meal offering of a sinner [brought as a matter of obligation], which should likewise require bringing near.
E. No, if you have stated that rule governing bringing near in the case of a free will offering, on which oil and frankincense have to be added, will you say the same of the meal offering of a sinner [Lev. 5:11], which does not require oil and frankincense?
F. The meal offering brought by a wife accused of adultery will prove to the contrary, for it does not require oil and frankincense, but it does require bringing near [as is stated explicitly at Num. 5:15].
G. No, if you have applied the requirement of bringing near to the meal offering brought by a wife accused of adultery, which also requires waving, will you say the same of the meal offering of a sinner, which do not have to be waved?
H. Lo, you must therefore reason by appeal to a polythetic analogy [in which not all traits pertain to all components of the category, but some traits apply to them all in common]:
I. the meal offering brought as a free will offering, which requires oil and frankincense, does not in all respects conform to the traits of the meal offering of a wife accused of adultery, which does not require oil and frankincense, and the meal offering of the wife accused of adultery, which requires waving, does not in all respects conform to the traits of a meal offering brought as a free will offering, which does not require waving.
J. But what they have in common is that they are alike in requiring the taking up of a handful and they are also alike in that they require bringing near.
K. I shall then introduce into the same classification the meal offering of a sinner, which is equivalent to them as to the matter of the taking up of a handful, and also should be equivalent to them as to the requirement of being drawn near.
L. But might one not argue that the trait that all have in common is that all of them may be brought equally by a rich and a poor person and require drawing near, which then excludes from the common classification the meal offering of a sinner, which does not conform to the rule that it may be brought equally by a rich and a poor person [but may be brought only by a poor person,] and such an offering also should not require being brought near.
M. [The fact that the polythetic classification yields indeterminate results means failure once more, and, accordingly,] Scripture states, "meal offering,"
N. with this meaning: all the same are the meal offering brought as a free will offering and the meal offering of a sinner, both this and that require being brought near.

The elegant exercise draws together the various types of meal offerings and shows that they cannot form a classification of either a monothetic or a polythetic character. Consequently, Scripture must be invoked to supply the proof for the classification of the discrete items. The important language is

at H-J: these differ from those, and those from these, but what they have in common is. . . . Then we demonstrate, with our appeal to Scripture, the sole valid source of polythetic classification, M. And this is constant throughout Sifra.

PARASHAT BEHUQOTAI PARASHAH 1
CCLX:I

1.A. ["If you walk in my statutes and observe my commandments and do them, then I will give you your rains in their season, and the land shall yield its increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit. And your threshing shall last to the time of vintage, and the vintage shall last to the time for sowing; and you shall eat your bread to the full and dwell in your land securely. And I will give peace in the land, and you shall lie down and none shall make you afraid; and I will remove evil beasts from the land, and the sword shall not go through your land. And you shall chase your enemies, and they shall fall before you by the sword. Five of you shall chase a hundred, and a hundred of you shall chase ten thousand; and your enemies shall fall before you by the sword. And I will have regard for your and make you fruitful and multiply you, and will confirm my covenant with you. And you shall eat old store long kept, and you shall clear out the old to make way for the new. And I will make my abode among you, and my soul shall not abhor you. And I will walk among you and will be your God and you shall be my people. I am the Lord your God, who brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, that you should not be their slaves; and I have broken the bars of your yoke and made you walk erect" (Lev. 26:3–13).]
B. "If you walk in my statutes":
C. This teaches that the Omnipresent desires the Israelites to work in the Torah.
D. And so Scripture says, "O that my people would listen to me, that Israel would walk in my ways! I would soon subdue their enemies and turn my hand against their foes" (Ps. 81:13–14).
E. O that you had hearkened to my commandments! Then your peace would have been like a river, and your righteousness like the waves of the sea; your offspring would have been like the sand, and your descendants like its grains; their name would never be cut off or destroyed from before me" (Is. 48:18).
F. And so Scripture says, "Oh that they had such a mind as this always, to fear me and to keep all my commandments, that it might go well with them and with their children forever" (Deut. 5:29).
G. This teaches that the Omnipresent desires the Israelites to work in the Torah.

2.A. "If you walk in my statutes":
B. Might this refer to the religious duties?
C. When Scripture says, "and observe my commandments and do them,"
D. lo, the religious duties are covered. Then how shall I interpret, "If you walk in my statutes"?
E. It is that they should work in the Torah.
F. And so it is said, "But if you will not hearken to me."
G. Might that refer to the religious duties?
H. When Scripture says, "and will not do all these commandments,"
I. lo, the religious duties are covered.
J. If so, why is it said, "But if you will not hearken to me"?
K. It is that they should be working in the Torah.

3.A. And so Scripture says, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy" (Exod. 20:8).
B. Might one suppose that what is involved is only to do so in your heart?
C. When Scripture says, "Observe [the Sabbath day]" (Deut. 5:12), lo, keeping it in the heart is covered.
D. How then am I to interpret "remember"?
E. It means that you should repeat with your mouth [the teachings concerning the Sabbath day].
F. And so Scripture says, "Remember and do not forget how you provoked the Lord your God to wrath in the wilderness, from the day you came out of the land of Egypt until you came to this place" (Deut. 9:7).
G. Might one suppose that what is involved is only to do so in your heart?
H. Scripture says, "and do not forget."
I. Lo, forgetting in the heart is covered.
J. How then am I to interpret "remember"?
K. It means that you should repeat with your mouth [the record of your behavior in the wilderness].
L. And so Scripture says, "[Take heed, in an attack of leprosy, to be very careful to do according to all that the Levitical priests shall direct you; as I commanded them, so you shall be careful to do.] Remember what the Lord your God did to Miriam on the way as you came forth out of Egypt" (Deut. 24:9).

M. Might one suppose that what is involved is only to do so in your heart?
N. When Scripture says, "Take heed, in an attack of leprosy, to be very careful to do,"
O. lo, forgetting in the heart is covered.
P. How then am I to interpret "remember"?
Q. It means that you should repeat with your mouth [the lessons to be learned in respect to Miriam].
R. And so Scripture says, "Remember what Amalek did to you on the way as you came out of Egypt . . . [you shall blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven; you shall not forget]" (Deut. 25:17, 19).
S. Might one suppose that what is involved is only to do so in your heart?
T. When Scripture says, "you shall not forget,"
U. lo, forgetting in the heart is covered.
V. How then am I to interpret "remember"?
W. It means that you should repeat with your mouth [the record of Amalek].
4.A. And so Scripture says, "And I will lay your cities waste."
B. Might one suppose that that is of human settlement?
C. When Scripture says, "And I will devastate the land,"
D. lo, that covers human settlement.
E. Then how am I to interpret, "And I will lay your cities waste"?
F. It means there will be no wayfarers.
5.A. And so Scripture says, "and will make your sanctuaries desolate."
B. Might one suppose that that is desolate of offerings?
C. When Scripture says, "and I will not smell your pleasing odors,"
D. lo, that covers the offerings.
E. Then how am I to interpret, "and will make your sanctuaries desolate"?
F. They will be laid waste even of pilgrims.
6.A. "If you walk in my statutes and observe my commandments and do them":
B. One who studies in order to do, not one who studies not in order to do.
C. For one who studies not in order to do—it would have been better for him had he not been created.

The proposition, No. 1, that the reference is to study of Torah is demonstrated at No. 2. The rhetoric, "might this refer . . . when Scripture says . . .," and so on, then generates a series of compositions that use the same rhetorical pattern. The pattern goes forward at Nos. 4, 5, and only at No. 6 do we revert to the point that No. 1 wished to introduce: study in order to observe.

PARASHAT BEHUQOTAI PEREQ 3
CCLXIII:I

1.A. "And you shall eat old store long kept, [and you shall clear out the old to make way for the new. And I will make my abode among you, and my soul shall not abhor you. And I will walk among you and I will be your God and you shall be my people. I am the Lord your God, who brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, that you should not be their slaves; and I have broken the bars of your yoke and made you walk erect:]"
B. This teaches that whatever is better aged tastes better than its fellow.
C. ". . . old":
D. I know only that the rule applies to wine, which customarily is kept for aging. How do I know that the same rule applies to everything that is allowed to age?
E. Scripture says, "Old store long kept."
2.A. ". . . and you shall clear out the old to make way for the new":
B. The granaries will be full of new grain, and the storage bins will be full of the old,
C. so you will wonder how we shall take out the old on account of the new harvest.
3.A. "And I will make my abode among you":
B. this refers to the house of the sanctuary.
4.A. ". . . and my soul shall not abhor you":
B. Once I shall redeem you, I shall never again reject you.
5.A. "And I will walk among you":
B. The matter may be compared to the case of a king who went out to stroll with his sharecropper in an orchard.
C. But the sharecropper hid from him.
D. Said the king to that sharecropper, "How come you're hiding from me? Lo, I am just like you."
E. So the Holy One, blessed be He, said to the righteous, "Why are you trembling before me?"
F. So the Holy One, blessed be He, is destined to walk with the righteous in the Garden of Eden in the coming future, and the righteous will see him and tremble before him,
G. [and he will say to them,] "[How come you're trembling before me?] Lo, I am just like you."
6.A. Might one suppose that my fear will not be upon you?

B. Scripture says, "and I will be your God and you shall be my people."
C. "If you do not believe in me through all these things, nonetheless 'I am the Lord your God, who brought you forth out of the land of Egypt.'
D. "I am the one who did wonders for you in Egypt. I am the one who is going to do for you all these wonders."
7.A. ". . . that you should not be their slaves":
B. What is the point of Scripture here?
C. Since it is said, "And he redeemed you from the house of slavery" (Deut. 7:8), might one suppose that they were slaves to slaves?
D. ". . . their slaves":
E. they were slaves to kings, not slaves to slaves.
8.A. ". . . and I have broken the bars of your yoke":
B. The matter may be compared to the case of a householder who had a cow for plowing, and he lent it to someone else to plough with it.
C. That man had ten sons. This one came and ploughed with it and went his way, and that one came and ploughed with it and went his way, so that the cow got tired and crouched down.
D. All the other cows came back, but that cow did not enter the fold.
E. The owner hardly agreed to accept consolation from that man, but he went and broke the yoke and cut off the carved ends of the yoke.
F. So is Israel in this world.
G. One ruler comes along and subjugates them and then goes his way, then another ruler comes along and subjugates them and goes his way, so that the furrow is very long.
H. So it is said, "Plowmen plowed across my back; they made long furrows. [The Lord, the righteous one, has snapped the cords of the wicked]" (Ps. 129:3–4).
I. Tomorrow, when the end comes, the Holy One, blessed be He, will not say to the nations, "Thus and so have you done to my children!"
J. Rather, he will immediately come and break the yoke and cut off the ends of the yoke.
K. For it is said, "and I have broken the bars of your yoke."
L. And further, "The Lord has snapped the cords of the wicked."
9.A. ". . . and made you walk erect":
B. R. Simeon says, "Two hundred cubits in height."
C. R. Judah says, "A hundred, like the first Adam."
D. I know that that statement applies only to men. How do I know that it applies to women too?
E. Scripture says, "[For our sons are like saplings, well tended in their youth;] our daughters are like cornerstones, trimmed to give shape to a palace" (Ps. 144:12).
F. And how high was the cornerstone of the temple? A hundred cubits.
10.A. Another teaching concerning the clause, "and made you walk erect":
B. Upright, not fearful of anyone.

The eschatological focus is made sharp at No. 4. The polemic throughout is now uniform: Israel is destined to be redeemed in the future, and when that happens, it will be for all time. Then the return to Zion and rebuilding of the temple did not fulfill the prophecies of redemption; Israel will have a future redemption, of which the prophets, including Moses, spoke. The text of No. 5 is somewhat flawed, but the sense is readily recovered. No. 6 reworks the materials at hand for the same purpose. No. 8 once more is explicit, with its parable of how God's redemption of Israel will take place: with impatience, when it comes.

Parashat Behuqotai Pereq 8
CCLXIX:I
1.A. "And you shall perish among the nations, [and the land of your enemies shall eat you up. And those of you that are left shall pine away in your enemies' lands because of their iniquity; and also because of the iniquities of their fathers they shall pine away like them]":
B. R. Aqiba says, "This refers to the ten tribes who went into exile in Media."
C. Others say, "'And you shall perish among the nations': The reference to 'perishing' speaks only of going into exile.
D. "Might one suppose that the sense is literal [that Israel really will perish among the nations]?
E. "When Scripture says, 'and the land of your enemies shall eat you up,' lo, we find a reference to literally perishing.
F. "Then how am I to interpret 'And you shall perish among the nations'?
G. "The reference to 'perishing' speaks only of going into exile."
2.A. "And those of you that are left shall pine away in your enemies' lands because of their iniquity":
B. The sense of "pining away" is on account of their iniquity.

3.A. ". . . and also because of the iniquities of their fathers they shall pine away like them":
B. Now has not the Omnipresent already assured Israel that he will not judge the fathers on account of the sons or the sons on account of the fathers?
C. For it is said, "The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, nor shall the children be put to death for the fathers; every man shall be put to death for his own sin" (Deut. 24:16).
D. If so, why is it said, "and also because of the iniquities of their fathers they shall pine away like them"?
E. When for generation after generation they are enthralled in the deeds of their fathers, then they are judged on their account.

"Exile" is taken to fulfill the curse of "perishing," and then comes the religious duty of "pining away." The important clarification comes at Nos. 2–3, which draws into alignment a variety of pertinent verses.

CCLXIX:II

1.A. "But if they confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their fathers [in their treachery which they committed against me, and also in walking contrary to me, so that I walked contrary to them and brought them into the land of their enemies; if then their uncircumcised heart is humbled and they make amends for their iniquity; then I will remember my covenant with Jacob, and I will remember my covenant also with Isaac and my covenant also with Abraham, and I will remember the land. But the land shall be left by them and enjoy its sabbaths while it lies desolate without them; and they shall make amends for their iniquity, because they spurned my ordinances, and their soul abhorred my statutes. Yet for all that, when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not spurn them, neither will I abhor them so as to destroy them utterly and break my covenant with them; for I am the Lord their God; but I will for their sake remember the covenant with their forefathers whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the nations, that I might be their God: I am the Lord. These are the statutes and ordinances and laws which the Lord made between him and the people of Israel on Mount Sinai by Moses]" (Lev. 26:40–46):
B. This is how things are as to repentance,
C. for as soon as they confess their sins, I forthwith revert and have mercy on them,
D. as it is said, "But if they confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their fathers in their treachery which they committed against me."
2.A. ". . . and also in walking contrary to me, so that I walked contrary to them":
B. In this world they treated my laws in a casual way, so I shall treat them in a casual way in this world."
3.A. ". . . and brought them into the land of their enemies":
B. This is a good deal for Israel.
C. For the Israelites are not to say, "Since we have gone into exile among the gentiles, let us act like them."
D. [God speaks:] "I shall not let them, but I shall call forth prophets against them, who will bring them back to the right way under my wings."
E. And how do we know?
F. "What is in your mind shall never happen, the thought, 'Let us be like the nations, like the tribes of the countries, and worship wood and stone.' 'As I live,' says the Lord God, 'surely with a might hand and an outstretched arm and with wrath poured out, I will be king over you. [I will bring you out from the peoples and gather you out of the countries where you are scattered, with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm and with wrath poured out'" (Ezek. 20:33–3).
G. "Whether you like it or not, with or without your consent, I shall establish my dominion over you."
4.A. ". . . if then their uncircumcised heart is humbled and they make amends for their iniquity":
B. This is how things are as to repentance,
C. for as soon as they humble their heart in repentance, I forthwith revert and have mercy on them,
D. as it is said, "if then their uncircumcised heart is humbled and they make amends for their iniquity."
5.A. ". . . then I will remember my covenant with Jacob, [and I will remember my covenant also with Isaac and my covenant also with Abraham]":
B. Why are the patriarchs listed in reverse order?
C. It is to indicate, if the deeds of Abraham are not sufficient, then the deeds of Isaac, and if the deeds of Isaac are not worthy, then the deeds of Jacob.
D. Each one of them is worthy that the world should depend upon his intervention.

6.A. And why with reference to Abraham and Jacob are remembrance mentioned, but not with respect to Isaac?
B. His ashes are regarded as though he were scooped up on the altar.
C. And why with respect to Abraham and Isaac, but not with respect to Jacob, is there mention of "also"?
D. This teaches that the bier of Jacob our father was without flaw [since he did not produce an evil son, unlike Abraham with Ishmael and Isaac with Esau].
7.A. I know only that the patriarchs are covered. How about the matriarchs?
B. Scripture uses the accusative particle, and the accusative particle encompasses only the matriarchs,
C. as it is said, "There they buried Abraham and [the accusative particle] Sarah his wife" (Gen. 49:31).
8.A. And how do we know that the covenant is made with the land?
B. Scripture says, "and I will remember the land."
9.A. "But the land shall be left by them and enjoy its sabbaths [while it lies desolate without them]":
B. "I said to them to sow for me for six years and release the year for me for one year, so that they might know that the land is mine.
C. "But that is not what they did, get up and go into exile from it, so that it may enjoy release on its own for all the years of release that it owes to me."
D. For it is said, "But the land shall be left by them and enjoy its sabbaths while it lies desolate without them, and they shall make amends for their iniquity."
10.A. ". . . because [Hebrew: because] and because, [that is, for this item and for that item, exactly] [they spurned my ordinances, and their soul abhorred my statutes]":
B. "Now did I collect item by item from Israel? And did I not exact punishment for them only for one out of a hundred sins that they committed before me?
C. "Why then is it said, 'because' [as though the penalty were exact]?
D. "It is because 'they spurned my ordinances'—this refers to the laws;
E. "and because 'their soul abhorred my statutes,'—this refers to the exegeses of Scripture.
11.A. "[Yet for all] that"—this refers to the sin committed in the Wilderness.
B. ". . . yet for"—this refers to the sin of Baal Peor.
C. ". . . yet for all that"—this refers to the sin involving the kings of the Amorites.
12.A. "[Yet for all that, when they are in the land of their enemies,] I will not spurn them, neither will I abhor them so as to destroy them utterly":
B. Now what is left for them, but that they not be spurned nor abhorred? For is it not the fact that all the good gifts that had been given to them were now taken away from them?
C. And were it not for the Scroll of the Torah that was left for them, they were in no way be different from the nations of the world!
D. But "I will not spurn them": in the time of Vespasian.
E. ". . . neither will I abhor them": in the time of Greece.
F. ". . . so as to destroy them utterly and break my covenant with them": in the time of Haman.
G. ". . . for I am the Lord their God": in the time of Gog.
13.A. And how do we know that the covenant is made with the tribal fathers?
B. As it is said, "but I will for their sake remember the covenant with their forefathers whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt":
C. This teaches that the covenant is made with the tribal fathers.
14.A. "These are the statutes and ordinances and Torahs":
B. ". . . the statutes": this refers to the exegeses of Scripture.
C. ". . . and ordinances": this refers to the laws.
D. ". . . and Torahs": this teaches that two Torahs were given to Israel, one in writing, the other oral.
E. Said R. Aqiba, "Now did Israel have only two Torahs? And did they not have many Torahs given to them? 'This is the Torah of burnt-offering' (Lev. 6:2), 'This is the Torah of the meal-offering' (Lev. 6:27), 'This is the Torah of the guilt-offering' (Lev. 7:1), 'This is the Torah of the sacrifice of peace-offerings' (Lev. 7:11), 'This is the Torah: when a man dies in a tent' (Num. 19:1)."
15.A. ". . . which the Lord made between him and the people of Israel [on Mount Sinai by Moses]":
B. Moses had the merit of being made the intermediary between Israel and their father in heaven.
C. ". . . on Mount Sinai by Moses":
D. This teaches that the Torah was given, encompassing all its laws, all its details, and all their amplifications, through Moses at Sinai.

Some of the items begin to reveal a protocol or pattern, e.g., Nos. 2, 3, 4, 9, 14. But overall, the impression I gain is one of a miscellany, since I see no polemical and well-focused proposition. The exegesis of the verse involving the patriarchs is full and rich, Nos. 5, 6, 7. The *heilsgeschichtliche* exercises, e.g., Nos. 11, 12, are not sustained and lack conviction; the order is wrong, and no point is drawn from them. The upshot is that the methodical and rigorous discourse established with reference to the legal passages finds no counterpart here.

JACOB NEUSNER

Leviticus in Judaism: Scripture and Society in Leviticus

THE book of Leviticus is mediated to Judaism by two Rabbinic readings of Scripture. The first, Sifra, ca. 300 C.E., asks about the relationship of the laws of the Mishnah and the Tosefta to the teachings of Scripture. The second, Leviticus Rabbah, ca. 450–500 C.E, forms of selected passages of Leviticus, read in light of other passages of Scripture altogether, large propositional expositions.

Leviticus Rabbah, closed in the mid-fifth century, sets forth, in the thirty-seven *parashiyyot* or chapters into which their document is divided, thirty-seven well-crafted propositions. The framers made no pretense at a systematic exegesis of sequences of verses of Scripture, abandoning the verse by verse mode of organizing discourse. They struck out on their own to compose a means of expressing their propositions in a more systematic and cogent way. Each of the thirty-seven chapters proves cogent, and all of them spell out their respective statements in an intellectually economical, if rich, manner. Each *parashah* makes its own point, but all of them furthermore form a single statement.

The message of Leviticus Rabbah—congruent with that of Genesis Rabbah—is that the laws of history may be known and that these laws, so far as Israel is concerned, focus upon the holy life of the community. If Israel then obeys the laws of society aimed at Israel's sanctification, then the foreordained history, resting on the merit of the ancestors, will unfold as Israel hopes. So there is no secret to the meaning of the events of the day, and Israel, for its part, can affect its destiny and effect salvation. The authorship of Leviticus Rabbah has thus joined the two great motifs, sanctification and salvation, by reading a biblical book, Leviticus, that is devoted to the former in the light of the requirements of the latter. In this way they made their fundamental point, which is that salvation at the end of history depends upon sanctification in the here and now.

To prove these points, the authors of the compositions make lists of facts that bear the same traits and show the working of rules of history. It follows that the mode of thought brought to bear upon the theme of history remains exactly the same as in the Mishnah: list-making, with data exhibiting similar taxonomic traits drawn together into lists based on common monothetic traits or definitions. These lists then through the power of repetition make a single enormous point or prove a social law of history. The catalogues of exemplary heroes and historical events serve a further purpose. They provide a model of how contemporary events are to be absorbed into the biblical paradigm. Since biblical events exemplify recurrent happenings, sin and redemption, forgiveness and atonement, they lose their one-time character. At the same time and in the same way, current events find a place within the ancient, but eternally present, paradigmatic scheme. So no new historical events, other than exemplary episodes in lives of heroes, demand narration because, through what is said about the past, what was happening in the times of the framers of Leviticus

Rabbah would also come under consideration.

This mode of dealing with biblical history and contemporary events produces two reciprocal effects. The first is the mythicization of biblical stories, their removal from the framework of ongoing, unique patterns of history and sequences of events and their transformation into accounts of things that happen all the time. The second is that contemporary events too lose all of their specificity and enter the paradigmatic framework of established mythic existence. So (1) the Scripture's myth happens every day, and (2) every day produces re-enactment of the Scripture's myth.

The focus of Leviticus Rabbah's laws of history is upon the society of Israel, its national fate and moral condition. Indeed, nearly all of the *parashiyyot* of Leviticus Rabbah turn out to deal with the national, social condition of Israel, and this in three contexts: (1) Israel's setting in the history of the nations, (2) the sanctified character of the inner life of Israel itself, (3) the future, salvific history of Israel. So the biblical book that deals with the tabernacle in the wilderness, which sages understood to form the model for the holy Temple later on built in Jerusalem, now is shown to address the holy people. That is no paradox, rather a logical next step in the exploration of sanctification. Leviticus really discusses not the consecration of the cult but the sanctification of the nation—its conformity to God's will laid forth in the Torah, and God's rules. Leviticus Rabbah executes the paradox of shifting categories, applying to the nation—not a locative category—and its history the category that in the book subject to commentary pertained to the holy place—a locative category—and its eternal condition. The nation now is like the cult then, the ordinary Israelite now like the priest then. The holy way of life lived now, through acts to which merit accrues, corresponds to the holy rites then. The process of metamorphosis is full, rich, complete. When everything stands for something else, the something else repeatedly turns out to be the nation. This is what our document spells out in exquisite detail, yet never missing the main point.

The message of Leviticus Rabbah paradoxically attaches itself to the book of Leviticus, as if that book had come from prophecy and addressed the issue of salvation. But it came from the priesthood and spoke of sanctification. The paradoxical syllogism—the as-if reading, the opposite of how things seem—of the composers of Leviticus Rabbah therefore reaches simple formulation. In the very setting of sanctification the authors find the promise of salvation. In the topics of the cult and the priesthood they uncover the national and social issues of the moral life and redemptive hope of Israel. The repeated comparison and contrast of priesthood and prophecy, sanctification and salvation, turn out to produce a complement, which comes to most perfect union in the text at hand.

What we have in Leviticus Rabbah is the result of the mode of thought not of prophets or historians, but of philosophers and scientists. The framers propose not to lay down, but to discover, rules governing Israel's life. As we find the rules of nature by identifying and classifying facts of natural life, so we find rules of society by identifying and classifying the facts of Israel's social life. In both modes of inquiry we make sense of things by bringing together like specimens and finding out whether they form a species, then bringing together like species and finding out whether they form a genus—in all, classifying data and identifying the rules that make possible the classification. That sort of thinking lies at the deepest level of list-making, which is work of offering a proposition and facts (for social rules) as much as a genus and its species (for rules of nature). Once discovered, the social rules of Israel's national life yield explicit statements, such as that God hates the arrogant and loves the humble. The logical status of these statements, in context, is as secure and unassailable as the logical status of statements about physics, ethics, or politics, as these emerge in philosophical thought. What differentiates the statements is not their logical status—as sound, scientific philosophy—but only their subject matter, on the one side, and distinctive rhetoric, on the other.

From Commentary to Propositional Statements

The framers of Leviticus Rabbah treat topics, not particular verses. They make generalizations that are freestanding. They express cogent propositions through extended compositions, not episodic ideas. Earlier, in Genesis Rabbah, as we have seen, things people wished to say were attached to predefined statements based on an existing text, constructed in accord with an organizing logic independent of the systematic expression of a single, well-framed idea. That is to say, the sequence of verses of Genesis and their contents played a massive role in the larger-scale organization of Genesis Rabbah and expression of its propositions. Now the authors of Leviticus Rabbah so collected and arranged their materials that an abstract proposition emerges. That proposition is not expressed only or mainly through episodic restatements, assigned, as I said, to an order established by a base text (whether Genesis or Leviticus, or a Mishnah-tractate, for that matter). Rather it emerges through a logic of its own.

What is new is the move from an essentially exegetical mode of logical discourse to a fundamentally philosophical one. It is the shift from discourse framed around an established (hence old) text to syllogistic argument organized around a proposed (hence new) theorem or proposition. What changes, therefore, is the way in which cogent thought takes place, as people moved from discourse contingent on some prior principle of organization to discourse autonomous of a ready-made program inherited from an earlier paradigm. When they read the rules of sanctification of the priesthood, the sages responsible for Leviticus Rabbah heard the message of the salvation of all Israel. Leviticus became the story of how Israel, purified from social sin and sanctified, would be saved.

The authors of Leviticus Rabbah express their ideas, first, by selecting materials already written for other purposes and using them for their own, second, by composing materials, and third, by arranging both in *parashiyyot* into an order through which propositions may reach expression. This involves both the modes of thought, and the topical program, and also the unifying proposition of the document as a whole. To summarize:

1. The principal mode of thought required one thing to be read in terms of another, one verse in light of a different verse (or topic, theme, symbol, idea), one situation in light of another.
2. The principal subject of thought is the moral condition of Israel, on the one side, and the salvation of Israel, on the other.
3. The single unifying proposition—the syllogism at the document's deepest structure—is that Israel's salvation depends upon its moral condition.

It follows that Leviticus Rabbah constitutes not merely diverse thoughts but a single, sustained composition. The authors do so through a rich tapestry of unstated propositions that are only illustrated, delineated at the outset, by the statement of some propositions. And these also are illustrated. It is, in a word, a syllogism by example—that is, by repeated appeal to facts—rather than by argument alone. For in context, an example constitutes a fact. The source of many examples or facts is Scripture, the foundation of all reality. Accordingly, in the context of Israelite life and culture, in which Scripture recorded facts, we have a severely logical, because entirely factual, statement of how rightly organized and classified facts sustain a proposition. In context that proposition is presented as rigorously and critically as the social rules of discourse allowed.

The authors of the document's compositions and composites transformed Scriptural history from a sequence of one-time events, leading from one place to some other, into an ever-present mythic world. No longer does Scripture speak of only one Moses, one David, one set of happenings of a distinctive and never-to-be-repeated character. Now whatever happens of which the thinkers propose to take account must enter and be absorbed into that established and ubiquitous pattern and structure founded in Scripture. It is not that biblical history repeats itself. Rather, biblical history no longer constitutes history at all, that is, history as a

linear, purposeful, continuous story of things that happened once, long ago, and pointed to some one moment in the future. Rather it becomes an account of things that happen every day—hence, an ever-present mythic world. In this way the basic trait of history in the salvific framework, its one-timeness and linearity, is reworked into the generative quality of sanctification, its routine and everyday, ongoing reality. When history enters a paradigm, it forms an exercise within philosophy, the search for the rules and regularities of the world. That is the profound achievement of the document before us.

And that is why, in Leviticus Rabbah, Scripture—the book of Leviticus—as a whole does not dictate the order of discourse, let alone its character. In this document the authorship at hand chose in Leviticus itself an isolated verse here, an odd phrase there. These then presented the pretext for propositional discourse commonly quite out of phase with the cited passage. The verses that are quoted ordinarily shift from the meanings they convey to the implications they contain, speaking about something, anything, other than what they seem to be saying. So the *as-if* frame of mind brought to Scripture precipitates renewal of Scripture, requiring the seeing of everything with fresh eyes. And the result of the new vision was a re-imagining of the social world envisioned by the document at hand, I mean, the everyday world of Israel in its Land in that same difficult time at which Genesis Rabbah was taking shape, sometime in the fifth century and the first century after the conversion of Constantine and the beginning of the Christian chapter of Western civilization. For what the sages now proposed was a reconstruction of existence along the lines of the ancient design of Scripture as they read it. What that meant was that, from a sequence of one-time and linear events, everything that happened was turned into a repetition of known and already experienced paradigms, hence, once more, a mythic being. The source and core of the myth derive from Scripture—Scripture reread, renewed, reconstructed along with the society that revered Scripture.

The recurrent message of the document may be stated in brief way. God loves Israel, so gave them the Torah, which defines their life and governs their welfare. Israel is alone in its category (*sui generis*), so what is a virtue to Israel is a vice to the nations, life-giving to Israel, poison to the gentiles. True, Israel sins, but God forgives that sin, having punished the nation on account of it. Such a process has yet to come to an end, but it will culminate in Israel's complete regeneration. Meanwhile, Israel's assurance of God's love lies in the many expressions of special concern, for even the humblest and most ordinary aspects of the national life: the food the nation eats, the sexual practices by which it procreates. These life-sustaining, life-transmitting activities draw God's special interest, as a mark of his general love for Israel. Israel then is supposed to achieve its life in conformity with the marks of God's love.

These indications moreover signify also the character of Israel's difficulty, namely, subordination to the nations in general, but to the fourth kingdom, Rome, in particular. Both food laws and skin diseases stand for the nations. There is yet another category of sin, also collective and generative of collective punishment, and that is social. The moral character of Israel's life, the treatment of people by one another, the practice of gossip and small-scale thuggery—these too draw down divine penalty. The nation's fate therefore corresponds to its moral condition. The moral condition, however, emerges not only from the current generation. Israel's richest hope lies in the merit of the ancestors, thus in the Scriptural record of the merits attained by the founders of the nation, those who originally brought it into being and gave it life.

The world to come will right all presently unbalanced relationships. What is good will go forward, what is bad will come to an end. The simple message is that the things people revere, the cult and its majestic course through the year, will go on; Jerusalem will come back, so too the Temple, in all their glory. Israel will be saved through the merit of the ancestors, atonement, study of Torah, practice of religious duties. The prevalence of the eschatological dimension in the formal structures, with its messianic and other expressions, here finds its counterpart in the

repetition of the same few symbols in the expression of doctrine.

The theme of the moral life of Israel produces propositions concerning not only the individual but, more important, the social virtues that the community as a whole must exhibit. First of all, the message to the individual constitutes a revision, for this context, of the address to the nation: humility as against arrogance, obedience as against sin, constant concern not to follow one's natural inclination to do evil or to overcome the natural limitations of the human condition. Israel must accept its fate, obey and rely on the merits accrued through the ages and God's special love. The individual must conform, in ordinary affairs, to this same paradigm of patience and submission. Great men and women, that is, individual heroes within the established paradigm, conform to that same pattern, exemplifying the national virtues. Among these, Moses stands out; he has no equal. The special position of the humble Moses is complemented by the patriarchs and by David, all of whom knew how to please God and left as an inheritance to Israel the merit they had thereby attained.

If we now ask about further recurring themes or topics, there is one so commonplace that we should have to list the majority of paragraphs of discourse in order to provide a complete list. It is the list of events in Israel's history, meaning, in this context, Israel's history solely in scriptural times, down through the return to Zion. The one-time events of the generation of the flood, Sodom and Gomorrah, the patriarchs and the sojourn in Egypt, the exodus, the revelation of the Torah at Sinai, the golden calf, the Davidic monarchy and the building of the Temple, Sennacherib, Hezekiah, and the destruction of northern Israel, Nebuchadnezzar and the destruction of the Temple in 586, the life of Israel in Babylonian captivity, Daniel and his associates, Mordecai and Haman—these events occur over and over again. They turn out to serve as paradigms of sin and atonement, steadfastness and divine intervention, and equivalent lessons.

We find, in fact, a fairly standard repertoire of scriptural heroes or villains, on the one side, and conventional lists of Israel's enemies and their actions and downfall, on the other. The boastful, for instance, include the generation of the flood, Sodom and Gomorrah, Pharaoh, Sisera, Sennacherib, Nebuchadnezzar, the wicked empire (Rome)—contrasted to Israel, "despised and humble in this world." The four kingdoms recur again and again, always ending with Rome, with the repeated message that after Rome will come Israel. But Israel has to make this happen through its faith and submission to God's will. Lists of enemies ring the changes on Cain, the Sodomites, Pharaoh, Sennacherib, Nebuchadnezzar, Haman.

At the center of the pretense, that is, the as-if mentality of Leviticus Rabbah and its framers, we find a simple proposition. Israel is God's special love. That love is shown in a simple way. Israel's present condition of subordination derives from its own deeds. It follows that God cares, so Israel may look forward to redemption on God's part in response to Israel's own regeneration through repentance. When the exegetes proceeded to open the scroll of Leviticus, they found numerous occasions to state that proposition in concrete terms and specific contexts. The sinner brings on his own sickness. But God heals through that very ailment. The nations of the world govern in heavy succession, but Israel's lack of faith guaranteed their rule and Israel's moment of renewal will end gentile rule. Israel's leaders—priests, prophets, kings—fall into an entirely different category from those of the nations, as much as does Israel. In these and other concrete allegations, the same classical message comes forth. Israel's sorry condition in no way testifies to Israel's true worth—the grandest pretense of all. All of the little evasions of the primary sense in favor of some other testify to this, the great denial that what is, is what counts. Leviticus Rabbah makes that statement with art and imagination. But it is never subtle about saying so.

Salvation and sanctification join together in Leviticus Rabbah. The laws of the book of Leviticus, focused as they are on the sanctification of the nation through its cult, in Leviticus Rabbah indicate the rules of salvation as well. The message of Leviticus Rabbah attaches itself to the book of

Leviticus, as if that book had come from prophecy and addressed the issue of the meaning of history and Israel's salvation. But the book of Leviticus came from the priesthood and spoke of sanctification. The paradoxical syllogism—the as-if reading, the opposite of how things seem—of the composers of Leviticus Rabbah therefore reaches simple formulation. In the very setting of sanctification we find the promise of salvation. In the topics of the cult and the priesthood we uncover the national and social issues of the moral life and redemptive hope of Israel. The repeated comparison and contrast of priesthood and prophecy, sanctification and salvation, turn out to produce a complement, which comes to most perfect union in the text at hand.

The focus of Leviticus Rabbah and its laws of history is upon the society of Israel, its national fate and moral condition. Indeed, nearly all of the *parashiyyot* of Leviticus Rabbah turn out to deal with the national, social condition of Israel, and this in three contexts: (1) Israel's setting in the history of the nations, (2) the sanctified character of the inner life of Israel itself, (3) the future, salvific history of Israel. So the biblical book that deals with the tabernacle, identified by the sages as the holy Temple, now is shown to address the holy people. Leviticus really discusses not the consecration of the cult but the sanctification of the nation—its conformity to God's will laid forth in the Torah, and God's rules. So when we review the document as a whole and ask what is that something else that the base text is supposed to address, it turns out that the sanctification of the cult stands for the salvation of the nation. So the nation now is like the cult then, the ordinary Israelite now like the priest then. The holy way of life lived now, through acts to which merit accrues, corresponds to the holy rites then. The process of metamorphosis is full, rich, complete. When everything stands for something else, the something else repeatedly turns out to be the nation. This is what our document spells out in exquisite detail, yet never missing the main point.

The particular task of this study now is clear: I have to define what I deem to be the formal dimensions of the documentary program of Leviticus Rabbah, and also to point to the components of the document that stand outside the framework of that program. In *Judaism and Scripture* I spelled out my views on how each *parashah* holds together and sets forth a coherent statement. Those results will not be repeated, only the form-analytical data are set forth and highlighted here.

The treatment of the festival of Tabernacles, part of which follows, allows us to see the transformation of facts into laws of history and the social order. The operative proposition remains comprehensive and simple: Israel's history is explained by Israel's moral condition, therefore Israel itself commands its own destiny, by the will of God.

LEVITICUS RABBAH PARASHAH THIRTY
XXX:I

1.A. "[On the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the produce of the land, you shall keep the feast of the Lord seven days. . . .] And you shall take on the first day [the fruit of goodly trees, branches of palm trees and boughs of leafy trees and willows of the brook, and you shall rejoice before the Lord your God for seven days]" (Lev. 23:39–40).
B. R. Abba bar Kahana commenced [discourse by citing the following verse]: "Take my instruction instead of silver, [and knowledge rather than choice gold]" (Prov. 8:10).
C. Said R. Abba bar Kahana, "Take the instruction of the Torah instead of silver.
D. "'Why do you weigh out money? Because there is no bread' (Is. 55:2).
E. "'Why do you weigh out money to the sons of Esau [Rome]? [It is because] "there is no bread," because you did not sate yourselves with the bread of the Torah.
F. "'And [why] do you labor? Because there is no satisfaction' [Is. 55:2].
G. "'Why do you labor while the nations of the world enjoy plenty? 'Because there is no satisfaction,' that is, because you have not sated yourselves with the wine of the Torah.
H. "For it is written, 'Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine I have mixed'" (Prov. 9:5).
2.A. R. Berekhiah and R. Hiyya, his father, in the name of R. Yosé b. Nehori, said, "It is written, 'I shall punish all who oppress him' [Jer. 30:20] even those who collect funds for charity [and in doing so, treat people badly], except

[for those who collect] the wages to be paid to teachers and repeaters of Mishnah traditions.
B. "For they receive [as a salary] only compensation for the loss of their time, [which they devote to teaching and learning rather than to earning a living].
C. "But as to the wages [for carrying out] a single matter in the Torah, no creature can pay the [appropriate] fee in reward."
3.A. It has been taught: On the New Year, a person's sustenance is decreed [for the coming year],
B. except for what a person pays out [for food in celebration] of the Sabbath, festivals, the celebration of the New Month,
C. and for what children bring to the house of their master [as his tuition].
D. If he adds [to what is originally decreed], [in Heaven] they add to his [resources], but if he deducts [from what he should give], [in Heaven] they deduct [from his wealth]. [Margulies, p. 688, n. to 1. 5, links this statement to Prov. 8:10.]
4.A. R. Yohanan was going up from Tiberias to Sepphoris. R. Hiyya bar Abba was supporting him. They came to a field. He said, "This field once belonged to me, but I sold it in order to acquire merit in the Torah."
B. They came to a vineyard, and he said, "This vineyard once belonged to me, but I sold it in order to acquire merit in the Torah."
C. They came to an olive grove, and he said, "This olive grove once belonged to me, but I sold it in order to acquire merit in the Torah."
D. R. Hiyya began to cry.
E. Said R. Yohanan, "Why are you crying?"
F. He said to him, "It is because you left nothing over to support you in your old age."
G. He said to him, "Hiyya, my disciple, is what I did such a light thing in your view? I sold something which was given in a spell of six days [of creation] and in exchange I acquired something which was given in a spell of forty days [of revelation].
H. "The entire world and everything in it was created in only six days, as it is written, 'For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth' [Exod. 20:11].
I. "But the Torah was given over a period of forty days, as it was said, 'And he was there with the Lord for forty days and forty nights' [Exod. 34:28].
J. "And it is written, 'And I remained on the mountain for forty days and forty nights'" (Deut. 9:9).
5.A. When R. Yohanan died, his generation recited concerning him [the following verse of Scripture]: "If a man should give all the wealth of his house for the love" (Song 8:7), with which R. Yohanan loved the Torah, "he would be utterly destitute" (Song 8:7).
B. When R. Hoshaiah of Tiria died, they saw his bier flying in the air. His generation recited concerning him [the following verse of Scripture]: "If a man should give all the wealth of his house for the love," with which the Holy One, blessed be he, loved Abba Hoshaiah of Tiria, "he would be utterly destitute" (Song 8:7).
C. When R. Eleazar b. R. Simeon died, his generation recited concerning him [the following verse of Scripture]: "Who is this who comes up out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, with all the powders of the merchant?" (Song 3:6).
D. What is the meaning of the clause, "With all the powders of the merchant"?
E. [Like a merchant who carries all sorts of desired powders,] he was a master of Scripture, a repeater of Mishnah traditions, a writer of liturgical supplications, and a poet.
6.A. Said R. Abba bar Kahana, "On the basis of the reward paid for one act of 'taking,' you may assess the reward for [taking] the palm branch [on the festival of Tabernacles].
B. "There was an act of taking in Egypt: 'You will take a bunch of hyssop' [Exod. 12:22].
C. "And how much was it worth? Four *manehs*.
D. "Yet that act of taking is what made Israel inherit the spoil at the sea, the spoil of Sihon and Og, and the spoil of the thirty-one kings.
E. "Now the palm-branch, which costs a person such a high price, and which involves so many religious duties—how much the more so [will a great reward be forthcoming on its account]!"
F. Therefore Moses admonished Israel, saying to them, "And you shall take on the first day . . ." (Lev. 23:40).

1.B seems to me to employ Is. 55:2 as an intersecting verse for the base verse of Prov. 8:10. That, at any rate, is the force of the exegesis of 1.C-G. Then the citation of Prov. 9:5 presents a secondary expansion of what

has been said about Is. 55:2, that is, 1.F-G lead us directly to H. What has happened to Lev. 23:39? In fact, 1.B-H are inserted whole because of the use of the key word, "take," at Lev. 23:39 and Prov. 8:10. From that point, Lev. 23:39 plays no role whatsoever. It is only at No. 6 that Lev. 23:39—with stress on the word "take"—recurs. The theme of the intervening passages is established at 1.B, namely, Torah and the value and importance of study of Torah. Nos. 2, 3, 4, and 5 all present variations on amplifications of that theme. I cannot follow Margulies in linking No. 3 to the intersecting verse. No. 5 is attached because of No. 4, and No. 4 because of its homily on the Torah. Since No. 6 ignores all that has gone before, and since No. 6 alone alludes to 1.A, we have to regard as remarkable the insertion of the rather sizable construction, 1.B through 5.E. In some other passages we see subtle connections between the base verse, or, at least, the theme of the base verse, and the exegesis of the intersecting verse, and the secondary exegetical expansions of verses introduced in connection with the intersecting one. But here I see none. Even the key word, "take," does not recur beyond the intersecting verse. So the editorial principle accounting for the inclusion of 1.B-5.E is the occurrence of a single shared word, that alone. That seems to me uncommon in our document. As to No. 6, the homily rests on the key word, "Take," and that is made explicit. But No. 6 does not rest upon the exegesis of any intersecting verse; it is a simple exegetical homily. 6.F is secondary, a redactional filling we shall see again.

XXX:II

1.A. "You show me the path of life, [in your presence] there is fullness of joy" (Ps. 16:11).
B. Said David before the Holy One, blessed be he, "Show me the open gateway to the life of the world to come."
2.A. R. Yudan said, "David said before the Holy One, blessed be he, 'Lord of the ages, "Show me the path of life.'"
B. "Said the Holy One, blessed be he, to David, 'If you seek life, look for fear, as it is said, "The fear of the Lord prolongs life"'" (Prov. 10:27).
C. R. Azariah said, "The Holy One, blessed be he, said to David, 'David, if you seek life, look for suffering (YYSWRYN), as it is said, "The reproofs of discipline (MWSR) are the way of life'" (Prov. 6:23).
D. Rabbis say, "The Holy One, blessed be he, said to David, 'David, if you seek life, look for Torah,' as it is said, 'It is a tree of life to those that hold fast to it'" (Prov. 3:18).
E. R. Abba said, "David said before the Holy One, blessed be he, 'Lord of the ages, "Show me the path of life."'
F. "Said to him the Holy One, blessed be he, 'Start fighting and exert yourself! Why are you puzzled? Work and eat: "Keep my commandments and live"'" (Prov. 4:4).
3.A. "The fullness (SWB') of joy" (Ps. 16:11):
B. Satisfy (SB'NW) us with five joys: Scripture, Mishnah, Talmud, Supplements, and Lore.
4.A. Another matter: "In your presence is the fullness of joy" (Ps. 16:11):
B. Read not "fullness (SWB')" but "seven (SB')." These are the seven groups of righteous men who are going to welcome the Presence of God. [The Hebrew, "receive the face," ordinarily yields, "welcome."]
C. And their face is like the sun, moon, firmament, stars, lightning, lilies, and the pure candelabrum that was in the house of the sanctuary.
D. How do we know that it is like the sun? As it is said, "Clear as the sun" (Song 6:10).
E. How do we know that it is like the moon? As it is said, "As lovely as the moon" (Song 6:10).
F. How do we know that it is like the firmament? As it is said, "And they that are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament" (Dan. 12:3).
G. How do we know that it is like the stars? As it is said, "And they that turn the many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever" (Dan. 12:3).
H. And how do we know that it is like the lightning? As it is said, "Their appearance is like torches, they run to and fro like lightning" (Nah. 2:5).
I. How do we know that it is like lilies? As it is said, "For the leader: upon the lilies" (Ps. 80:1).
J. How do we know that it will be like the pure candelabrum? As it is said, "And he said to me, 'What do you see?' And I said, 'I looked and behold [there was] a candelabrum all of gold'" (Zech. 4:2).
5.A. "At your right hand is bliss for evermore" (Ps. 16:11).

B. Said David before the Holy One, blessed be he, "Lord of the ages, now who will tell me which group is the most beloved and blissful of them all?"
C. There were two Amoras [who differed on this matter]. One of them said, "It is the group that comes as representative of the Torah and commandments, as it is said, 'With a flaming fire at his right hand'" (Deut. 33:2).
D. And the other said, "This refers to the scribes, the Mishnah repeaters, and those who teach children in their fear, who are going to stand at the right hand of the Holy One, blessed be he.
E. "That is in line with the following verse of Scripture: 'I keep the Lord always before me, because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved'" (Ps. 16:8).
F. "[You show me the path of life, in your presence there is fullness of joy,] in your right hand are pleasures for evermore'" (Ps. 16:11).
6.A. Another matter: "You show me the path of life" (Ps. 16:11) speaks of Israel.
B. Israel stated before the Holy One, blessed be he, "Lord of the ages, 'Show me the path of life.'"
C. Said to them the Holy One, blessed be he, "Lo, you have the ten days of repentance between the New Year and the Day of Atonement."
7.A. "In your presence there is fullness (SWB') of joy" (Ps. 16:11):
B. Read only "seven (SB') joys." These are the seven religious duties associated with the Festival [Tabernacles].
C. These are they: the four species that are joined in the palm branch, [the building of] the Tabernacle, [the offering of] the festal sacrifice, [the offering of] the sacrifice of rejoicing.
8.A. What is the meaning of the phrase, "In your right hand are pleasures for evermore (NSH)" (Ps. 16:11)?
B. Said R. Abin, "This refers to the palm branch. It is comparable to one who is victor (NWSH) and so takes the branch as [a sign of his victory].
C. "The matter may be compared to two who came before a judge. Now we do not know which one of them is the victor. But it is the one who takes the palm branch in his hand who we know to be the victor.
D. "So is the case of Israel and the nations of the world. The [latter] come and draw an indictment before the Holy One, blessed be he, on the New Year, and we do not know which party is victor.
E. "But when Israel goes forth from before the Holy One, blessed be he, with their palm branches and their citrons in their hands, we know that it is Israel that is the victor."
F. Therefore Moses admonishes Israel, saying to them, "And you shall take on the first day . . . [branches of palm trees]" (Lev. 23:40).

The base verse is not explicitly cited, but the intersecting verse—Ps. 16:11—leads us to it, after a long and majestic sequence of exegeses of the three elements of the intersecting verse. When we reach the base verse, the connection turns out to be tight and persuasive. Nos. 6–8 show us the ideal form, that is, a clause-by-clause reading of the intersecting verse within a coherent hermeneutic. If then we look back to the earlier materials, Nos. 2–5, we find a somewhat less cogent exegesis of the three clauses. No. 2 reads the verse as a statement by David. No. 4 would look to be interpolated, were it not for No. 5, which brings us back to David, and which refers to the materials expounded at No. 4. Then the original repertoire of key words—Torah, commandments, and the like—is reviewed. Nos. 6–8 go over the same verse with respect to Israel, introducing the matter of the New Year, Day of Atonement, and Festival. Then each clause suitably links to the several themes at hand. 8.F is tacked on.

XXX:III

1.A. "He will regard the prayer of the destitute [and will not despise their supplication]" (Ps. 102:17).
B. Said R. Abin, "We are unable to make sense of David's character. Sometimes he calls himself king, and sometimes he calls himself destitute.
C. "How so? When he foresaw that righteous men were going to come from him, such as Asa, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, and Josiah, he would call himself king as it is said, 'Give the king your judgments, O God' [Ps. 72:1].
D. "When he foresaw that wicked men would come forth from him, for example, Ahaz, Manasseh, and Amon, he would call himself destitute, as it is said, 'A prayer of one afflicted, when he is faint [and pours out his complaint before the Lord]' [Ps. 102:1].
2.A. R. Alexandri interpreted the cited verse (Ps. 102:1) to speak of a worker. [The one afflicted is the worker. The word for faint, 'TP, bears the meaning, cloak oneself, hence in prayer. The worker then has delayed his prayer, waiting

for the overseer to leave, at which point he can stop and say his prayer. So he postpones his prayer (Margulies).] [So Alexandri says], "Just as a worker sits and watches all day long for when the overseer will leave for a bit, so he is late when he says [his prayer], [so David speaks at Ps. 102:1: 'Hear my prayer, O Lord; let my cry come to you']."

B. "That [interpretation of the word 'TP] is in line with the use in the following verse: 'And those cattle and sheep that were born late belonged to Laban'" (Gen. 30:42).

C. What is the meaning of "those that were born late"?

D. R. Isaac bar Haqqolah said, "The ones that tarried."

3.A. Another interpretation: "He will regard the prayer of the destitute individual [and will not despise their supplication]" (Ps. 102:17):

B. Said R. Simeon b. Laqish, "As to this verse, the first half of it is not consistent with the second half, and vice versa.

C. "If it is to be, 'He will regard the prayer of the destitute [individual],' he should then have said, 'And will not despise *his* supplication.'

D. "But if it is to be, 'He will not despise *their* supplication,' then he should have said, 'He will regard the prayer of those who are destitute.'

E. "But [when David wrote,] 'He will regard the prayer of the individual destitute,' this [referred to] the prayer of Manasseh, king of Judah.

F. "And [when David wrote,] 'He will not despise their supplication,' this [referred to] his prayer and the prayer of his fathers.

G. "That is in line with the following verse of Scripture: 'And he prayed to him, and he was entreated (Y'TR) of him'" (2 Chron. 33:13).

H. What is the meaning of the phrase, "He was entreated of him"?

I. Said R. Eleazar b. R. Simeon, "In Arabia they call a breach an *athirta* [so an opening was made for his prayer to penetrate to the Throne of God]" (Slotki, p. 385, n. 3).

J. "And he brought him back to Jerusalem, his kingdom" (2 Chron. 33:13).

K. How did he bring him back?

L. R. Samuel b. R. Jonah said in the name of R. Aha, "He brought him back with a wind.

M. "That is in line with the phrase, 'He causes the wind to blow.'"

N. At that moment: "And Manasseh knew that the Lord is God" (2 Chron. 33:13). Then Manasseh said, "There is justice and there is a judge."

4.A. Another interpretation: "He will regard the prayer of the destitute" (Ps. 102:17) refers to the generation of Mordecai.

B. "And will not despise their supplication"—for he did not despise either his prayer or the prayer of his fathers.

5.A. R. Isaac interpreted the verse to speak of these generations that have neither king nor prophet, neither priest nor Urim and Thummim, but who have only this prayer alone.

B. "Said David before the Holy One, blessed be he, 'Lord of the ages, "Do not despise their prayer. 'Let this be recorded for a generation to come'" [Ps. 102:18].

C. "On the basis of that statement, [we know that] the Holy One, blessed be he, accepts penitents.

D. "'So that a people yet unborn may praise the Lord' [Ps. 102:18].

E. "For the Holy One, blessed be he, will create them as a new act of creation."

6.A. Another interpretation: "Let this be recorded for a generation to come" (Ps. 102:18):

B. This refers to the generation of Hezekiah, which was tottering toward death.

C. "So that a people yet unborn may praise the Lord" (Ps. 102:18): for the Holy One, blessed be he, created them in a new act of creation.

7.A. Another interpretation: "Let this be recorded for a generation to come" (Ps. 102:18):

B. This refers to the generation of Mordecai, which was tottering toward death.

C. "So that a people yet unborn may praise the Lord" (Ps. 102:18): for the Holy One, blessed be he, created them in a new act of creation.

8.A. Another interpretation: "Let this be recorded for a generation to come" (Ps. 102:18):

B. This refers to these very generations, which are tottering to death.

C. "So that a people yet unborn may praise the Lord" (Ps. 102:18):

D. For the Holy One, blessed be he, is going to create them anew, in a new act of creation.

9.A. What do we have to do [in order to reach that end]? Take up the palm branch and citron and praise the Holy One, blessed be he.

B. Therefore Moses admonishes Israel, saying, "You shall take on the first day . . ." (Lev. 23:30).

Until the very final lines, No. 9, we have no reason at all to associate the exegesis of

Ps. 102:17–18 with the theme of the Festival. On the contrary, all of the materials are independent of the present "base verse," and none of them hints at what is to come at the end. On that basis I regard the construction as complete prior to its insertion here, with a redactional hand contributing only No. 9 to validate the inclusion of an otherwise irrelevant exegetical exercise. The established pattern—the tripartite exegesis of Ps. 102:17, 18—is worked out at No. 1 (supplemented by Nos. 2 and 3), then Nos. 4–8.

XXX:IV

1.A. "'Let the field exult and everything in it.' [Then shall all the trees of the wood sing for joy before the Lord, for he comes, for he comes to judge the earth]" (Ps. 96:12–13).
B. "Let the field exult" refers to the world, as it is said, "And it came to pass, when they were in the field" (Gen. 4:8) [and determined to divide up the world between them].
C. "And everything in it" refers to creatures.
D. That is in line with the following verse of Scripture: "The earth is the Lord's, and all that is in it" (Ps. 24:1).
E. "Then shall all the trees of the wood sing for joy" (Ps. 96:12).
F. Said R. Aha, "The forest and all the trees of the forest.
G. "The forest refers to fruit-bearing trees.
H. "'And all the trees of the forest' encompasses those trees that do not bear fruit."
I. Before whom? "Before the Lord" (Ps. 96:14).
J. Why? "For he comes" on New Year and on the Day of Atonement.
K. To do what? "To judge the earth: He will judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with his truth" (Ps. 96:13).
L. On that basis what do we have to do? We take a citron, boughs of leafy trees, a palm branch, and a willow [branch], and give praise before the Holy One, blessed be he: "And you shall take on the first day . . ." (Lev. 23:40).

Ps. 96:12–14 supplies direct connections to the theme of Tabernacles, with its reference to trees of the wood, exultation and rejoicing, judgment, and the like. These topics are explicitly read into the intersecting verse at the end, but I am inclined to see the whole as a single and unified construction, with 1.F-H as an interpolated comment.

XXX:V

1.A. "I wash my hands in innocence [and go about your altar, O Lord, singing aloud a song of thanksgiving, and telling all your wondrous deeds]" (Ps. 26:6–7).
B. [What I require I acquire] through purchase, not theft.
C. For we have learned there: "A stolen or dried up palm branch is invalid. And one deriving from an *asherah* or an apostate town is invalid" (M. Suk. 3:1A-B).
D. "And go about your altar, O Lord" (Ps. 26:7).
E. That is in line with what we have learned there (M. Suk. 4:5): Every day they circumambulate the altar one time and say, "We beseech you, O Lord, save now. We beseech you, O Lord, make us prosper now [Ps. 118:25]. R. Judah says, "I and he—save now." On that day they circumambulate the altar seven times.
2.A. "Singing aloud a song of thanksgiving" (Ps. 26:7)—this refers to the offerings.
B. "And telling all your wondrous deeds" (Ps. 26:7):
C. Said R. Abin, "This refers to the *Hallel* Psalms [Ps. 113–118], which contain [praise for what God has done] in the past, also [what he has done] during these generations, as well as what will apply to the days of the Messiah, to the time of Gog and Magog, and to the age to come.
D. "'When Israel went forth from Egypt' [Ps. 114:1] refers to the past.
E. "'Not for us, O Lord, not for us' [Ps. 115:1] refers to the present generations.
F. "'I love for the Lord to hear' [Ps. 116:1] refers to the days of the Messiah.
G. "'All the nations have encompassed me' [Ps. 118:10] speaks of the time of Gog and Magog.
H. "'You are my God and I shall exalt you' [Ps. 118:28] speaks of the age to come."

No. 1 makes a point quite distinct from No. 2. "The innocence" of Ps. 26:6 refers to the fact that one must not steal the objects used to carry out the religious duty of the waving of the palm branch on Tabernacles. I assume that the allusion to Tabernacles in Ps. 26:6–7 is found in the referring to circumambulating the altar, such as is done in the rite on that day, as 1.C makes explicit. No. 2 then expands on the cited verse in a different way. To be sure, the *Hallel* Psalms

are recited on Tabernacles, but they serve all other festivals as well. Only No. 1 therefore relates to the established context of Lev. 23:40. It follows that the exegeses of Ps. 26:6–7 were assembled and only then utilized—both the relevant and also the irrelevant parts—for the present purpose.

Now we turn from the base verse/intersecting verse compositions to the systematic reading of the verse under study, Lev. 23:40. This order—base verse/intersecting verse, then verse-by-verse exegesis—is absolutely fixed for this document and all others that combine the two forms. It serves our purpose to give only part of the remainder of the *parashah*.

XXX:VI

1.A. "And you will take for yourselves" (Lev. 23:40).
B. R. Hiyya taught, "[You take the required species] through purchase and not through thievery."
C. "For yourselves"—for every one of you. They must be yours and not stolen.
2.A. Said R. Levi, "One who takes a stolen palm branch—to what is he comparable? To a thief who sat at the crossroads and mugged passersby.
B. "One time a legate came by, to collect the taxes for that town. [The thug] rose before him and mugged him and took everything he had. After some time the thug was caught and put in prison. The legate heard and came to him. He said to him, 'Give back what you grabbed from me, and I'll argue in your behalf before the king.'
C. "He said to him, 'Of everything that I robbed and of everything that I took, I have nothing except for this rug that is under me, and it belongs to you.'
D. "He said to him, 'Give it to me, and I'll argue in your behalf before the king.'
E. "He said to him, 'Take it.'
F. "He said to him, 'You should know that tomorrow you are going before the king for judgment, and he will ask you and say to you, "Is there anyone who can argue in your behalf," and you may say to him, "I have the legate, Mr. So-and-so, to speak in my behalf," and he will send and call me, and I shall come and argue in your behalf before him.'
G. "The next day they set him up for judgment before the king. The king asked him, saying to him, 'Do you have anyone to argue in your behalf?'
H. "He said to him, 'I have a legate, Mr. So-and-so, to speak in my behalf.'
I. "The king sent for him. He said to him, 'Do you know anything to say in behalf of this man?'
J. "He said to him, 'I do indeed have knowledge. When you sent me to collect the taxes of that town, he rose up before me and mugged me and took everything that I had. That rug that belongs to me gives testimony against him.'
K. "Everyone began to cry out, saying, 'Woe for this one, whose defense attorney has turned into his prosecutor.'
L. "So a person acquires a palm branch to attain merit through it. But if it was a stolen one, [the branch] cries out before the Holy One, blessed be he, 'I am stolen! I am taken by violence.'
M. "And the ministering angels say, 'Woe for this one, whose defense attorney has turned into his prosecutor!'"

The theme of the preceding, the prohibition against using a stolen palm branch, is given two further treatments. Except in a formal way none of this pretends to relate to the specific verses of Lev. 23:40ff., nor do we find an intersecting verse.

XXX:VII

1.A. "[On the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered the produce of the land, you shall keep the feast of the Lord seven days;] on the first day [shall be a solemn rest]" (Lev. 23:40).
B. This in fact is the fifteenth day, yet you speak of the first day!
C. R. Mana of Sheab and R. Joshua of Sikhnin in the name of R. Levi said, "The matter may be compared to the case of a town that owed arrears to the king, so the king went to collect [what was owing]. [When he had reached] ten *mils* [that is, about a half a mile, from the town], the great men of the town came forth and praised him. He remitted a third of their [unpaid] tax. When he came within five *mils* of the town, the middle-rank people came out and acclaimed him, so he remitted yet another third [of what was owing to him]. When he entered the town, men, women, and children, came forth and praised him. He remitted the whole [of the tax].
D. "Said the king, 'What happened happened. From now on we shall begin keeping books [afresh].'

E. "So on the eve of the New Year, the great men of the generation fast, and the Holy One, blessed be he, remits a third of their [that is, Israel's] sins. From the New Year to the Day of Atonement outstanding individuals fast, and the Holy One, blessed be he, remits a third of their [that is, Israel's] sins. On the Day of Atonement all of them fast, men, women, and children, so the Holy One, blessed be he, says to Israel, 'What happened happened. From now on we shall begin keeping books [afresh].'"

2.A. Said R. Aha, "'For with you there is forgiveness' [Ps. 80:4]. From the New Year forgiveness awaits you.

B. "Why so long? 'So that you may be feared' [Ps. 80:4]. To put your fear into creatures.

C. "From the Day of Atonement to the Festival, all the Israelites are kept busy with doing religious duties. This one takes up the task of building his booth, that one preparing his palm branches. On the first day of the Festival, all Israel stands before the Holy One, blessed be he, with their palm branches and citrons in their hands, praising the name of the Holy One, blessed be he. The Holy One, blessed be he, says to them, 'What happened happened. From now on we shall begin keeping books [afresh].'"

D. Therefore Moses admonished Israel: "And you shall take on the first day . . ." (Lev. 23:40).

Nos. 1 and 2 go over the same matter. It seems to me that Aha's version puts into concrete terms the basic point of Levi's. 2.D is out of place, since it ignores the antecedent materials and takes as its proof text a formula in no way important in the preceding. Once more the ultimate redactor's hand is in evidence.

Now we come to one of the most interesting types of later Midrash-composition, the "another-interpretation" or "another-matter" formulations. We have already examined one of these, in Genesis Rabbah. Here is a much richer example of the same.

XXX:VIII

1.A. "On the first day" (Lev. 23:40):

B. By day and not by night.

C. "On the . . . day"—even on the Sabbath.

D. "On the *first* day"—only the first day [of the Festival] overrides the restrictions [of Sabbath rest. When the Sabbath coincides with other than the first day of the Festival, one does not carry the palm branch.]

2.A. "[And you shall take . . .] the fruit of a goodly tree [branches of palm trees and boughs of leafy trees and willows of the brook]" (Lev. 23:40).

B. R. Hiyya taught, "'A tree': the taste of the wood and fruit of which is the same. This is the citron."

C. "Goodly (HDR)": Ben Azzai said, "[Fruit] that remains [HDR] on its tree from year to year."

D. Aqilas the proselyte translated [HDR] as, "That which dwells by water (Greek: *hudor*)."

E. "Branches of a palm tree" (Lev. 23:40): R. Tarfon says, "[As to the branch of a palm tree (KPWT)], it must be bound. If it was separated, one has to bind it up."

F. "Boughs of leafy trees:" The branches of which cover the wood. One has to say, "This is the myrtle."

G. "Willows of the brook:" I know only that they must come from a brook. How do I know that those that come from a valley or a hill [also are valid]? Scripture says, "*And* willows of a brook."

H. Abba Saul says, "'*And* willows of the brook' refers to the requirement that there be two, one willow for the palm branch, and a willow for the sanctuary."

I. R. Ishmael says, "'The fruit of goodly trees' indicates one; 'branches of palm tree' also one; 'boughs of leafy trees,' three; 'willows of the brook,' two. Two [of the myrtles] may have the twigs trimmed at the top, and one may not."

J. R. Tarfon says, "Even all three of them may be trimmed."

XXX:IX

1.A. Another interpretation: "The fruit of goodly (HDR) trees:" this refers to the Holy One, blessed be he, concerning whom it is written, "You are clothed with glory and majesty (HDR)" (Ps. 104:1).

B. "Branches of palm trees:" this refers to the Holy One, blessed be he, concerning whom it is written, "The Righteous One shall flourish like a palm tree" (Ps. 92:13).

C. "Boughs of leafy trees:" this refers to the Holy One, blessed be he, concerning whom it is written, "And he stands among the leafy trees" (Zech. 1:8).

D. "And willows of the brook:" this refers to the Holy One, blessed be he, concerning whom it is written, "Extol him who rides upon the willows, whose name is the Lord" (Ps. 68:5).

The base text is systematically read in line with intersecting verses referring to God. The species are read as symbolizing, in sequence, God, the patriarchs and matriarchs, Torah institutions, and Israel.

XXX:X

1.A. Another interpretation: "The fruit of goodly (HDR) trees" (Lev. 23:40):
B. This refers to Abraham, whom the Holy One, blessed be he, honored (HDR) with a goodly old age,
C. as it is said, "And Abraham was an old man, growing old in years" (Gen. 24:1).
D. And it is written, "And you will honor (HDR) the face of an old man" (Lev. 19:32).
E. "Branches (KPWT) of palm trees" (Lev. 23:40):
F. This refers to Isaac, who was tied (KPWT) and bound upon the altar.
G. "And boughs of leafy trees" (Lev. 23:40):
H. This refers to Jacob. Just as a myrtle is rich in leaves, so Jacob was rich in children.
I. "Willows of the brook" (Lev. 23:40):
J. This refers to Joseph. Just as the willow wilts before the other three species do, so Joseph died before his brothers did.

2.A. Another interpretation: "The fruit of goodly trees" (Lev. 23:40):
B. This refers to Sarah, whom the Holy One, blessed be he, honored with a goodly old age, as it is said, "And Abraham and Sarah were old" (Gen. 18:11).
C. "Branches of palm trees" (Lev. 23:40): this refers to Rebecca. Just as a palm tree contains both edible fruit and thorns, so Rebecca produced a righteous and a wicked son [Jacob and Esau].
D. "Boughs of leafy trees" (Lev. 23:40): this refers to Leah. Just as a myrtle is rich in leaves, so Leah was rich in children.
E. "And willows of the brook" (Lev. 23:40): this refers to Rachel. Just as the willow wilts before the other three species do, so Rachel died before her sister.

The powerful result of the exegesis is to link the species of the Festival to the patriarchs and matriarchs of Israel. It is continuous with the foregoing, linking the species to God, and with what is to follow, as the species will be compared to Israel's leadership, on the one side, as well, finally, to ordinary people, on the other.

XXX:XI

1.A. Another interpretation: "The fruit of goodly trees" (Lev. 23:40): this refers to the great Sanhedrin of Israel, which the Holy One, blessed be he, honored (HDR) with old age, as it is said, "You will rise up before old age" (Lev. 19:32).
B. "Branches (KPWT) of palm trees" (Lev. 23:40): this refers to disciples of sages, who compel (KWPYN) themselves to study Torah from one another.
C. "Boughs of leafy trees:" this refers to the three rows of disciples who sit before them.
D. "And willows of the brook" (Lev. 23:40): this refers to the court scribes, who stand before them, one on the right side, the other on the left, and write down the opinions of those who vote to acquit and those who vote to convict.

XXX:XII

1.A. Another interpretation: "The fruit of goodly trees" refers to Israel.
B. Just as a citron has both taste and fragrance, so in Israel are people who have [the merit of both] Torah and good deeds.
C. "Branches of palm trees" (Lev. 23:30): refers to Israel. Just as a palm has a taste but no fragrance, so in Israel are people who have [the merit of] Torah but not of good deeds.
D. "Boughs of leafy trees:" refers to Israel. Just as a myrtle has a fragrance but no taste, so in Israel are people who have the merit of good deeds but not of Torah.
E. "Willows of the brook:" refers to Israel. Just as a willow has neither taste nor fragrance, so in Israel are those who have the [merit] neither of Torah nor of good deeds.
F. What does the Holy One, blessed be he, do for them? Utterly to destroy them is not possible.
G. Rather, said the Holy One, blessed be he, "Let them all be joined together in a single bond, and they will effect atonement for one another.
H. "And if you have done so, at that moment I shall be exalted."
I. That is in line with the following verse of Scripture: "He who builds his upper chambers in heaven" (Amos 9:6).
J. And when is he exalted? When they are joined together in a single bond, as it is said, "When he has founded his bond upon the earth" (Amos 9:6).
K. Therefore Moses admonishes Israel: "And you shall take . . ." (Lev. 23:40).

The final exegesis reaches its climax here, concluding, then, with the redactional

subscript. The composition follows a single program, from beginning to end, as it rehearses the several intersecting realms of Judaic symbol systems. Always at the climax come Torah and good deeds. 1.K is tacked on.

JACOB NEUSNER

Life Cycle in Judaism

JUDAISM defines a divinely ordained system of required behaviors, referred to as *mitzvot*, fulfillment of which expresses acquiescence to the divine will. Among these behaviors, life cycle ceremonies enhance worship of God by elevating otherwise ordinary moments into opportunities to fulfill God's demands. Even as life under foreign rule and over a period of thousands of years has created many distinctive Jewish cultures, through life cycle rituals, the Jewish people have maintained and been united by a not-quite-national, not-merely-religious, something-other-than-cultural, and more-than-just-ethnic identity. Life cycle ceremonies bind together Jews everywhere, enriching their lives both in the immediate physical and temporal present and in an imagined eternal and timeless realm. Through these celebrations, Jews sanctify crucial moments in individual and communal life, connecting each Jew to his or her family, each family to the community, and each community to the entire Jewish people and the entirety of Jewish history.

BIRTH

Creating new life by bringing children into the world is one of the most sacred and cherished duties under Jewish law, and the life cycle rituals surrounding birth reflect this special importance (fig. 86). In the ceremonies of baby naming, circumcision, and redemption of the first born, the newborn is brought into the fold and given a place among the Jewish people.

Brit milah, literally, "covenant of circumcision," often referred to in the Ashkenazic pronunciation, *bris milah*, or, simply, *bris*, is the religious rite of removal of the foreskin (prepuce) on the eighth day after the birth of a male child (figs. 49–50). Circumcision is a physical sign of the covenant between God and Israel, established with Abraham, reaffirmed at Sinai, and passed on through every generation. The significance of this biblical injunction, as understood by Jews today, is exemplified by the unique status of circumcision in Jewish law. Fulfillment of the commandment on the eighth day is so important that it takes precedence over the Sabbath; additionally, to be considered a Jew, even adult converts must undergo circumcision. Circumcision thus marks a boundary issue for Jews, defining who is a Jew; it is of such importance that even those who are the most marginal to the modern community continue to circumcise their sons.

The traditional ceremony, maintained especially by Orthodox and Conservative Jews, comprises four basic elements in which the mohel ("circumciser") performs the three necessary elements of circumcision: *milah*—the cutting off of the foreskin; *periah*—the tearing off and folding back of the mucous membrane to expose the glans; and *metzitzah*—the sucking of the blood from the wound. The other principal religious actors consist of the baby's father, the sandek (holder of the baby), and, in some communities, guests the family wishes to honor with participation. Literary evidence suggests that the liturgy for the circumcision ceremony was fixed during the medieval period, when a liturgical foundation from the Talmudic period was elaborated upon.[1]

REDEMPTION OF THE FIRST BORN (*PIDYON HABEN*)

Scripture assigns a special status to first-borns of humans, animals, and even fruit trees. A first born son, like all first "fruits," is to be dedicated to the service of God (Exod. 13:2, Num. 8:17, 8:6, 3:13); a rite of

redemption is used as a symbolic release from this requirement of cultic service.

Following Scripture's explicit designation for God of one who "opens the womb," only a male child born vaginally is subject to the obligation of the first born and, hence, must be redeemed (B. Bek. 46a); those born of Cesarean section are exempt (Exod. 13:2, B. Bek 19a, 47b. Also, those born into the tribe of Levi, which includes members of the priestly caste, are exempt, as is the first born of the daughter of a priest (Exod. 13:2, B. Bek 13a). Following the explicit statement of Num. 3:40, redemption takes place when the child is a minimum of thirty days old (B. Bek. 49a, B. Men. 37a). Usually, the ceremony is performed on the thirty-first day (B. Bek. 49a), unless that day is a Sabbath or festival, when it occurs on the day following instead. The obligation to redeem the child falls on the father, but it may be fulfilled by the mother, grandparent, or court, if the father is unwilling or unable. A first born who was not redeemed as an infant can later redeem himself.

The redemption ceremony takes place at a *seudat mitzvah*, a celebratory meal such as accompanies many life cycle ceremonies. After ritual hand washing and breaking of bread, the child is brought in, often on a decorative tray. The father declares, "This child is the first-born of his mother, and the holy one, blessed be he, has commanded that he be redeemed," followed by passages from Num. 18:16 and Exod. 13:2. The Kohen—a member of the priestly caste, who receives the redemption money in place of the child—then asks in Aramaic, "Which do you prefer: to give away your firstborn son, who is the first issue of his mother's womb, or to redeem him for five shekels, as you are required to do by the Torah?" The father indicates the latter and recites the blessing that pertains to the commandment of redemption, followed by the *shehekhianu*-blessing, which thanks God for allowing those present to have reached this milestone event. The priest accepts the money—five silver dollars are often used in the United States today—and, while swinging it in a circular fashion over the baby's head, says:

> This instead of that; this in exchange for that; this is pardoned because of that. May this son enter into life, into Torah, and into fear of heaven. May it be your will that just as he has entered into this redemption, so shall he enter into Torah, the marriage canopy, and good deeds. Amen.

The priest then blesses the baby, hands him back to the father, and blesses the wine. The meal follows the ceremony and is concluded with a special recitation of the Grace after Meals.

Baby Naming

While Jews cherish the birth of a girl equally to that of a boy, no commandments comparable to circumcision or redemption apply. As a result, until recently, elaborate ceremonies have not accompanied a female birth. Traditionally, the baby has only been formally named, usually on the first Sabbath after birth, though this may be done on any day that the Torah is read during synagogue worship. In the traditional ceremony, the baby need not even be present. Rather, during the Torah reading, the father is called to the Torah (*aliyah*), and, after his participation in the reading, a blessing is recited for the mother and newborn. First, the mother is blessed "with her daughter who has been born to her in good fortune and for which her husband has come up to the Torah." After she is wished a complete recovery, the new baby is blessed and named with the formula: "let her name in Israel be _____ daughter of _____ (the father's Hebrew name)." As in the naming of a boy at the end of the circumcision ceremony, it then is urged that her parents are able to raise her to "Torah, the marital canopy, and good deeds."

Rites of Passage

While the concept of a legal age of majority has always been fundamental to Jewish law and practice, the idea of celebrating the attainment of that age is comparatively new. The Torah does not explicitly mention

an age necessary for religious majority, specifying only twenty as the minimum age at which one becomes required to bear arms (Num. 1). Nevertheless, the centuries old bar mitzvah ceremony and the fairly recent confirmation ceremony have become powerful rites of passage for adolescent Jews, their families, and the community at large.

Bar/Bat Mitzvah

This term, designating one who has become subject to the commandments, applies to a boy who has completed his thirteenth year or a girl who has completed her twelfth. These children now are considered adults and may serve as full participants in religious matters. They are responsible for fulfillment of all commandments appropriate to their gender and are liable to punishment or sanction for failure to fulfill religious obligations. Although one becomes bar/bat mitzvah—subject to the commandments as an adult—regardless of whether a formal acknowledgment has been made, the practice of the bar mitzvah ceremony—for boys—has been standard since at least the fourteenth century. The bat mitzvah ritual for girls is of much more recent origin.

The designation "bar mitzvah" appears first in the Talmud, where it refers to every grown member of the Jewish people (B. B.M. 96a). Thus it is synonymous with the Rabbinic terms *gadol*, meaning "adult," and *bar onshin*, literally, "subject to punishment." It also is used to refer to the time an individual reaches physical maturity (B. Kid. 16b). Soferim 18:7 speaks of taking the new bar mitzvah to the priests in the Temple in Jerusalem to receive a blessing. In the midrash, the age of thirteen is emphasized. According to Pirke d'Rabbi Eliezer 26, Abraham rejected his father's idols at this age. Gen. Rabbah 63:10, on Gen. 35:27, explains that Jacob and Esau parted ways at thirteen, with Jacob going to study Torah and Esau to worship idols. At thirteen a child becomes responsible for his own sins; until that point he relies on the merit of his father, who is responsible for him (Yalk. Ruth 600).

The first reference to a bar mitzvah ceremony comparable to the one still used today appears in the writings of Mordechai ben Hillel, cited by Jacob Halevi and Moses Isserles (Darkhe Moshe, Orah Hayyim 225:1). This ceremony consists of three basic parts: 1) a blessing recited by the father who, after being called to the Torah for an aliyah, thanks God for removing his responsibility for the sins of his son (*barukh shepetarani*) and the son's first time being called to participate in the reading of the Torah; 2) the *derashah*, in which the young adult delivers a Talmudic discourse; and 3) the *seudah*, a festive meal and communal celebration in honor of the bar mitzvah. This ceremony may occur on any day that the Torah is read, although most frequently it takes place on Sabbath morning. The regular worship service is performed but in a more festive atmosphere, often with the bar mitzvah leading all or part of the prayers. During the Torah service, the bar mitzvah generally reads the prophetic portion (haftarah), and often reads part or all of the Torah lection as well. The *derashah* traditionally is a Talmudic discourse and remains so in the Orthodox community; in many settings, however, it has become an opportunity for thanking parents and teachers and giving a more general speech (figs. 87–88).

In traditional Judaism, women do not lead congregational worship, so that, until recently, the bar mitzvah ceremony was used for boys alone. The bat mitzvah ceremony, which celebrates a young woman's maturation, was introduced in the United States by Mordechai Kaplan, the founder of Reconstructionist Judaism, in 1922, to mark his daughter's religious coming of age (fig. 131). It became widespread in the United States in the decades following World War II. In egalitarian synagogues, especially of the Reform, Reconstructionist, and Conservative movements, the bat mitzvah celebration is indistinguishable from the bar mitzvah of a boy, with the girl reciting the Torah, haftarah, and other prayers in the synagogue. In traditional settings, by contrast, the bat mitzvah often is marked at home or in school, not in the setting of public worship, in which women do not participate. In some orthodox settings, the father and brothers of the bat mitzvah are

called to the Torah, followed by a special sermon given by or about the young woman.

Confirmation

Emphasizing that bar mitzvah age children are to immature to appreciate the seriousness of their coming of age, in the beginning of the nineteenth century in Germany, the Reform movement introduced to Judaism the confirmation rite. Borrowed from Protestant Christianity, confirmation originally was intended to replace the bar mitzvah celebration. Only later did it become an additional ceremony, usually marked together by an entire class of religious school students around age sixteen and during the holiday of Pentecost, which marks God's covenant with Israel (figs. 89–91). Since there is no traditional formula for this celebration, each class and each community develops its own ceremony, often combining declarations of faith, inspirational speeches, and music. Confirmation is not practiced in the Orthodox community, where it is generally derided as having no roots in Judaism.

Marriage

With the family unit at the center of Jewish life, the creation of a new family represents the continuity of the Jewish people and is awarded a very special place in Jewish tradition. As in other life cycle events, through the marriage ceremony, an otherwise personal event—a man and woman's consummating of their love—becomes an opportunity for the involvement of family, friends, and community and an occasion on which the individual's personal history is viewed on the backdrop of the past history and future salvation of the Jewish people as a whole.

The idea of the union of a man and woman in marriage goes back to the earliest biblical narratives and is dealt with extensively in the Rabbinic literature, which emphasizes marriage's primacy in Jewish Life. The Talmud states, "He who has no wife is not a proper man" (B. Yeb. 63). Similarly, the Shulkhan Arukh, definitive source of Jewish law, equates one who denies his instincts and fails to produce children with one who "shed blood, diminished the image of God, and made the Shekhinah depart from Israel." Conversely, "If one loves his wife as himself and honors her more than himself. . . .—of such a one, Scripture says, 'And you shall know that your tabernacle shall be in peace and you shall visit your habitation and you shall not sin' (Job 5:24)" (B. Yeb. 62b).

Historically, arranged marriages were common, and the matchmaker played an important role in Jewish life. Still, romance also has been known throughout history, and, in modern times, obviously, it is most common for individuals to choose for themselves who they marry. This idea is known as early as the Mishnah, which holds that, on the Day of Atonement and the fifteenth of Ab, unmarried girls dressed in white headed to the fields where men waited to choose brides.

In the Talmudic and medieval periods, the engagement of a man and woman was formalized in a ceremony called *shidukhin*, at which the financial conditions of the marriage (*tenaim*) were set (figs. 92–93). Today, some communities practice what is known as a *wort* (Yiddish for "word"), at which the couple informally announces the engagement, while the *tenaim* ceremony takes place immediately prior to the wedding. Generally, on the Sabbath prior to the wedding, the groom—in egalitarian communities, bride and groom—is honored with an aliyah and sometimes is showered with rice, nuts, or candy, in a tradition known in Yiddish as *aufruf*. According to the Jewish laws of family purity, the woman must immerse herself in a ritual bath (*mikveh*) before having sexual relations, so this too must take place before the wedding. Various other customs, not related to the actual wedding, are known. In some communities, the bride and groom do not see each other for a specified period of time; there is a distinctly Ashkenazic custom of cemetery visitation at the graves of deceased parents; and we find the Oriental *hinnah* ceremony, in which the hands of the bride are painted red. Because marriage is viewed as a new beginning, it also is customary before the ceremony for both bride

and groom to fast and to recite the confession of sins normally said during the afternoon service of the Day of Atonement.

Weddings may take place on any day other than a Sabbath, festival, day of public mourning, or during the period between Passover and Pentecost. The reason is that one may neither mix the holiness of a wedding with the holiness of a holiday, nor lesson the joy of the wedding with the sadness of mourning or other unhappiness (B. Bes. 36b-37a; B. M.K. 8b; Sh. Ar. OH 546, 339:4, 551:2, 493:1). Likewise, weddings are generally postponed in the event that a relative of the bride or groom dies, such that he or she becomes a mourner (B. Ket. 3b-4a). According to the Mishnah, virgins were wed on Wednesday, widows Thursday (M. Ket. 1:1), although this custom is not generally followed today.

Usually, the wedding takes place in the synagogue, but it may be performed anywhere. Some groups, including Hasidim, perform the ceremony outdoors. In all cases, the ceremony takes place under a wedding canopy (*huppah*), which may be elaborate or as simple as a prayer shawl supported on four sides (figs. 94–95). The canopy symbolizes the marital union and the couple's building a new home together. Although Jewish law does not require that a rabbi perform the ceremony, this has become customary. Preferably, the wedding ceremony should take place in the presence of quorum (*minyan*). Prior to the ceremony, the marriage contract (*ketubah*) is completed, signed by two witnesses, and acquired symbolically by the groom. Other pre-wedding customs found in some communities have no direct relationship to the wedding. These include a scholarly discourse offered by the groom, ashes placed on the forehead of the groom in memorial of the Temple in Jerusalem, and a ceremony known in Yiddish as *bedeken di kale*, in which the groom lowers the veil over the face of the bride and blesses her. Then candles are lit and the bride and groom are led in a procession to the *huppah*, where the actual ceremony takes place.

While Scripture makes no specific reference to a marriage ceremony, the rabbis interpret "taking a wife" (Deut. 24:1) to refer to a legal transaction in which the groom acquires the bride as property. The Talmudic literature knows three methods by which this acquisition may be effected: the acceptance by the bride of an object of monetary value, such as a ring or coin; a betrothal/consecration ceremony (referred to as *erusin* or *kiddushin*) that includes a written contract (*ketubah*); or through intercourse. Today, all three elements are combined in the wedding ceremony. Indeed, by the medieval period, Rabbinic legal decisors rejected the idea that a marriage could be completed through intercourse or monetary exchange alone, without a public consecration ceremony.

Today the *erusin* consists of two components: a sanctification ceremony with blessings and, at the heart of the legal transaction, the exchange of the ring. After the groom is escorted to the *huppah* in a procession that typically includes parents, the officiating rabbi says: "Blessed is the one who has come; may the one who is powerful . . . blessed . . . great . . . supreme above all bless the bride and groom." The bride approaches the groom and, in traditional ceremonies, circles him three or seven times, depending on custom. The rabbi then says: "Blessed is the one who has come; may the one who understands the speech of the rose among the thorns, the love of a bride, who is the joy of the beloved ones, bless the groom and the bride." The bride now stands to the right of the groom, facing the spot where the Temple in Jerusalem once stood. The rabbi recites a blessing over the wine, then one thanking God for detailing forbidden unions, followed by the bride and groom's drinking from the wine cup. At this point the groom, holding an unadorned gold ring (some communities use a coin) proclaims, "Behold, you are consecrated to me with this ring according to the law of Moses and Israel," after which he places the ring on the bride's index finger. Now the *ketubah*, the marriage contract, is publicly read.

The ketubah enumerates the husband's ten obligations to his wife and his four rights to her property. He must provide her with sustenance and maintenance, and he is obligated to cohabit with her. Other obligations include alimony upon dissolution of the marriage, payment of medical expenses, a

commitment to ransom her from captivity, to pay burial and related expenses, to support her and minor daughters through his estate upon his death, and to bequeath his property to the sons of the marriage. The husband's rights concern her property, for he is in essence acquiring her, and that entitles him to her property as well. Thus he has a right in her handiwork, property she discovers by chance, property she already owns, and he is the sole benefactor of her estate.

After the reading of the *ketubah*, the *nissuin*, sometimes referred to as *huppah*, follows. In ancient times the *huppah* likely was a tent in which the marriage was consummated. Today the marriage bond is created through the pronouncement by the officiating rabbi or anyone else of seven blessings (*shevah berakhot*).[2] The first blessing is pronounced over wine; the second refers to God's creating everything for his honor; the third recognizes God for fashioning the human being; the fourth expands upon the third, mentioning that human beings were fashioned in God's image; the fifth asks that God bring intense joy and exultation to the barren one—Zion—through the ingathering of her children; the sixth asks God to gladden the beloved companions as he gladdened Adam and Eve in Eden; the final blessing captures the messianic significance of the creation of each new family unit:

> Blessed are you, Lord our God, ruler over the universe, who created joy and gladness, groom and bride, mirth, glad song, pleasure, delight, love, fellowship, harmony, and companionship. Lord our God, let there soon be heard in the cities of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem the sound of joy and the sound of gladness, the voice of the groom and the voice of the bride, the sound of the groom's jubilance from their canopies and the youths from their feasts of song. Blessed are you, Lord, who gladdens the groom with the bride.

Now groom and bride drink the wine, and, in the second stage of the *nissuin*, the groom steps on and breaks a glass, a memorial, it generally is believed, of the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple. The marriage celebration now is completed with *yihud*, a brief period of time that the bride and groom spend secluded together, representing symbolic consummation of the marriage. Thus, even if the validity of the present-day *huppah* ceremony were to be challenged, the couple would be deemed married under the Talmudic standard of cohabitation (Mishneh Torah, Ishut 10:1; Shulkhan Arukh EH 55:1).

Following the ceremony, the wedding is celebrated at a reception and then by seven days of festive meals and a full year of private rejoicing (figs. 96–97). This follows biblical precedent, since Genesis refers to Laban's gathering all the people for the wedding feast of Jacob and Leah (Gen. 29:22). At Gen. 29:27, he asks Jacob to "complete the week of this one"—understood to refer to a protracted wedding celebration—before continuing to work towards acquiring Rachel as a bride. The bridal week also appears at Judg. 14:12, where Samson allows the guests the seven days of the wedding feast to solve his riddle. At the initial wedding meal and the festive meals on each of the subsequent nights, the Grace after Meals includes a special introduction and a repetition of the seven blessing initially recited under the wedding canopy. To take part in this communal celebration, traditionally, couples remained at home for at least the first week following marriage. During this entire week, the groom is required to stay with the bride (B. Ket. 3a), ensuring that he devotes all his energies to her. The couple remains in a state of private celebration for the next full year, exempting the groom from certain ritual obligations and, in ancient times, from military service.

Forbidden Marriages, Divorce, Levirate Marriage

A marriage is dissolved by the death of one partner, through the completion of a divorce procedure, or, in the case of a prohibited union, by a court. The seriousness of the rules governing these circumstances demonstrates the primacy of marriage in Jewish life.

While all efforts are made to encourage a husband and wife to remain together, Jewish law enumerates specific grounds for divorce, which normally entails the husband's giving the wife a *get*, that is, a writ of divorce. He may initiate the divorce on

the grounds of her adultery, apostasy, immoral behavior, refusal of conjugal rights, inability to bear children, incurable disease, mental illness, refusal to cohabit, or in light of defects/diseases present before marriage but unknown to him. While a wife may not herself prepare a *get* so as to divorce her husband, where she alone desires divorce, she may petition a religious court (*bet din*), which has the power to compel the husband to divorce her. Grounds for such an action include his immoral behavior, habitual cruelty, incurable disease, engagement in an occupation that makes him revolting and prohibits cohabitation, sterility, refusal of conjugal rights, apostasy, refusal to support her, or if he has fled the country because of criminal behavior.

While such considerations are largely theoretical and hardly applied in the modern world, two sorts of conditions exist in which a court may initiate divorce without the petition of either party. In the first type of case, the marriage, though forbidden, is considered valid, so that a *get* is required. Such circumstances include marriage between incestuous relatives not of a close degree, marriage of a priest to a divorcee, marriage between a childless widow who has not been released from her obligation to marry her deceased husband's brother (Levirate marriage), a marriage in which the wife has engaged in adultery and the husband neglects himself to initiate divorce, and cases in which health considerations prevent intercourse. A second sort of circumstance does not require a *get*, for the marriage was never recognized to begin with. Such instances include an incestuous marriage between close relatives, marriage to a previously married woman who has not obtained a *get*, and cases in which a wife leaves her husband.

Ordinarily, death poses no problem for the dissolution of marriage. Still, various restrictions may apply, primarily controlling the widow's remarriage. She must wait a minimum of three months before remarrying, so that there is no question of correctly identifying the father of any child she subsequently carries. A nursing mother may not remarry until the child is weaned. Finally, a woman whose husband disappears but is not known to be dead may not remarry until adequate evidence of his death is manifest.

Levirate marriage takes place between a widow who's husband died childless and his brother (known as the levir). Halizah ("removal") is a ceremony that releases the woman from the obligation of Levirate marriage, allowing her to marry someone else. Although Levirate marriage itself no longer is practiced, traditional Jews still require halizah, formally releasing the widow from the biblically required union with her brother-in-law. The ceremony takes place before a court of five men, at least three of whom must be rabbis. In an initial meeting, the widow and levir are questioned regarding their desire not to marry, and instructions are given regarding the declarations that each must pronounce in Hebrew; the woman also is instructed to fast until the ceremony. In the ceremony, which takes place on the following day, a special shoe is removed from the levir's foot. The woman approaches him and proclaims in Hebrew, "My husband's brother refuses to raise up unto his brother a name in Israel; he will not perform the duty of a husband's brother unto me," to which he replies, "I do not want to take her." The widow then removes the shoe from his foot, tosses it away, and spits on the floor in front of him, saying, "So shall it be done unto the man that does not build up his brother's house, and his name shall be called in Israel, the house of him that had his shoe loosened." All present respond three times in unison, "he that had his shoe loosened." Concluding prayers are read by the judges, and often a certificate that the widow is free to remarry is drawn up.

Conversion

A *ger* (proselyte; literally, "stranger;" "client) is an individual born of a faith other than Judaism who undergoes the requirements of ritual immersion, circumcision (for males), and the instruction necessary to be counted as a member of the Jewish people.[3] Upon completion of these requirements, the proselyte is considered to achieve a new iden-

tity and is regarded as a Jew in every respect. B. Yeb. 47a elucidates the conversion procedure:

> If at the present time a man desires to become a proselyte, he is to be addressed as follows: "What reason do you have for becoming a proselyte? Do you not know that Israel at the present time is persecuted and oppressed, despised, harassed, and overcome by afflictions?" If he replies, "I know and yet am unworthy," he is accepted forthwith and given instructions in some of the minor and major commandments . . . he is also told of the punishment for the transgressions of the commandments . . . and the reward granted for their fulfillment.

During First and Second Temple times, a proselyte brought a sacrifice as well as undergoing circumcision and immersion, although, when a sacrifice was not possible, only circumcision and immersion were required (B. Ker. 9a). Conversion takes place before a religious court of three members (B. Yeb. 46b-47a). A proselyte is considered to undergo a spiritual rebirth and so is like a newborn child with no relation to his prior family (B. Yeb. 22a). Questions in the Mishnah regarding a proselyte's right to refer to the "God of our fathers" were settled by Maimonides in his letter to Obadiah, where he deemed proselytes to be children of Abraham through a spiritual connection.

For adults, the conversion procedure begins when, in the presence of two witnesses, the prospective proselyte is questioned regarding his or her knowledge of Judaism and intention to uphold the commandments. The ceremony then has two main components, circumcision (for men) and ritual immersion in a mikveh. The circumcision operation takes place in the presence of a religious court and resembles the ceremony for circumcising a newborn child. If the man already is circumcised, a very small amount of blood is drawn, a ritual act for the purpose of membership in the Jewish people. For women and men, the ceremony concludes with immersion followed by the recitation of the blessing for the immersion and the *shehekhianu*, used on all joyous occasions. While, generally, blessings are recited before performing a ritual act, in this case, the individual becomes a Jew only through the immersion; the blessings may be recited only once this transformation has taken place. Now the new convert also is welcomed to the Jewish people and given a Jewish name, the formula of which indicates that his or her father is the patriarch Abraham. Often, a male proselyte will don prayer shawl and phylacteries, and both men and women fulfill the commandment of saying the Shema-prayer for the first time.

The same basic formula is followed for children, with the exceptions that their parents are questioned regarding their intent to raise the child in the traditions of Judaism. Very small children are immersed by a member of the bet din, and if the child is too small to recite the blessing over the immersion, it is omitted. Additionally, the prayer welcoming the child and assigning a Jewish name is taken from the circumcision liturgy.

From its inception, the Reform movement rejected the two main components of conversion, circumcision and immersion, favoring instead only education and a declaration of faith. This has caused much controversy both in the United States and Canada and in Israel, where opinions differ over who may be considered a Jew according to religious law. Founders of the Reform movement were warm towards converts, and many actually were in favor of Jewish proselytizing. This led to much heated debate among Rabbinic authorities, and many of these repercussions are still felt today. Traditional Jews do not recognize the validity of non-Orthodox conversions, stressing that alongside circumcision and immersion, a convert must accept the responsibility to fulfill all the commandments. The issue is complicated Reform's acceptance of patrilineal descent as a criteria for Jewishness and its recognition as Jews of children born before a non-Jew converts. The movement thus does not see a need for conversion in cases in which the Orthodox would require one. The present status quo in Israel is not to recognize Jewish pluralism, effectively invalidating liberal religious procedures. Conversion to Judaism and its related issues have caused a growing rift between the traditional and liberal communities, a rift that it does not appear will be reconciled in the near future.

Death and Mourning

Just as life begins with ceremonies shared by family, friends, and the larger community, so does it end. Because Judaism stresses the importance of life in this world, the rituals surrounding death focus primarily on the survivors, though proper preparation of the body and burial remain of the utmost importance.[4]

All efforts are made to comfort the sick and pray for them, in the hope that they will recover. One even is permitted to violate the Sabbath in order to comfort a dying person (B. Git. 28a). The dying person generally is not left alone, and it is considered both important and honorable to be present at the point of death (*yetziat neshamah*; "exit of the soul"). This transition to death is to be made as comfortable as possible, though when it seems that the final moments are near, the dying person is encouraged to recite the formal death-bed confession of sins. This is done as gently as possible with the words, "Confess your sins. Many confessed their sins and did not die, and many who did not confess died. In reward for having confessed, may you live; but everyone who confesses has a share in the world to come" (Yoreh Deah 338:1). A minimum confession is recorded at M. San. 6:2: "May my death be an atonement for all of my transgressions." A more complete confession reads (Yoreh Deah 337:2):

> I acknowledge before you, Lord, my God, and the God of my fathers, that my recovery and death are in your hand. May it be your will that you heal me with total recovery, but, if I die, may my death be an atonement for all the errors, iniquities, and willful sins that I have erred, sinned and transgressed before you. May you grant my share in the Garden of Eden and privilege me for the world to come that is concealed for the righteous.

The confession usually ends with the recitation of the Shema: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is One."

Tradition recognized death to have occurred once breathing, heartbeat, pulse, and corneal reflexes cease. The body was not touched for eight minutes while a feather was laid over the lips to check for any sign of respiration. Once death is established, the eyes and mouth are closed and the limbs settled next to the body. The body is placed on the floor with the feet facing the door and covered with a sheet. Custom dictates that a candle should be lit and placed near the head, all mirrors covered, and stored water poured out. In modern situations, in which death often occurs in a hospital, these customs are not generally practiced. Still, in all settings, as a sign of respect for the dead, utmost care is taken to behave in a dignified manner before the body.

The burial society (*hevrah kadishah*) is comprised of religious Jews trained and committed to preparing the body for burial through the ritual process known as *taharah*. Through *taharah* ("purification"), the body is both physically cleaned and cleansed in a spiritual sense. Considered of great importance, this procedure is conducted with the utmost sobriety and solemnity. The *taharah* procedures are performed by individuals of the same sex as the deceased. The entire body, including the head, is washed with warm water. The fingers and toes are thoroughly cleansed, and the hair of the dead is combed. During the procedure, the body should not be placed face down, a degrading posture, but should be inclined, first on one side and then on the other. After the body has been thoroughly cleansed, it is washed with nine *kavin*, about twenty-four quarts, of water. This is done with the corpse placed in a standing position on the ground or upon straw, and the water poured over the head to run down over the entire body.

After this process is completed, the head is washed with a mixture of egg and wine. If a person died in a manner that blood continued flowing after death (including women who died in childbirth), the priority to bury all the remains of the person—including the blood—takes precedence over *taharah*, and the body is simply wrapped and buried in a sheet called a *sovev*. All Jews, regardless of gender, age, social, or economic status, are buried in the same white shrouds, known as *tachrichim*, stressing the equality found in death. These shrouds are made of linen, without binding, seams, knots, or pockets and consist of a head dress (men), trousers, chemise, kittel,

belt, and *sovev*. Men are wrapped in the prayer shawl they wore throughout their lifetime, with one fringe cut of, symbolizing the inability to continue fulfilling mitzvot. There are traditions to place some soil from the land of Israel and some shards of pottery in the casket, as well as to bend the fingers on the hand in a specific manner and to include some sort of utensil to aid the deceased in burrowing a tunnel to Israel at the time of the resurrection, though these two customs are derided in the Kitzur Shulkhan Arukh 197:5. The *taharah* and dressing are completed shortly before the funeral, and, immediately following, the deceased is laid to rest.

Members of the *hevrah kadishah* stay with the body constantly during the period between death and interment, reciting continuously from the Psalms. Gen. 3:19's reference to the human's return to the dust is understood to mean that the entire body should be buried as it was during life. Any blood that was lost after death, including blood stained clothing or even blood stained earth, must be collected and buried with the body. Because of this principle, Judaism expressly forbids cremation and embalming (unless considered necessary for health reasons) and frowns upon autopsies and organ transplant, unless they will save another's life. The dead are buried with anything that was worn as a part of the body (e.g., wigs, artificial teeth) but not jewelry or any other ornamentation.

Mourning

Mourning—*avelut*—is traditionally understood to encompass the expressions of grief and the religious observances followed by those who have lost a parent, child, sibling, or spouse, or which apply in the case of a treasured leader or after a national tragedy. Such practices have their foundation in Scripture, which, for instance, speaks of Abraham's purchasing a tomb and burying Sarah, and Reuben and Jacob's tearing of their clothes in mourning for Joseph. After Jacob's death, "Egypt bewailed him for seventy days" (Gen. 50:3), and the statement that "Joseph fell on his father's face" (Gen. 50:1) is interpreted as a fulfillment of God's promise to Jacob (Gen. 46:3), that "Joseph shall place his hands your eyes," that is, close them after death. The Torah also delineates which mourning practices are acceptable, ruling out pagan rites such as mutilation of the flesh (Lev. 21:5; Deut 14:1). The hagiographa and prophetic books contain many additional references to death and mourning practices.

Most of the mourning practices followed by Jews today thus have biblical precedent, and the Rabbinic literature, accordingly, records mourning rituals that have remained virtually unchanged to the present time. The Talmud holds that the mourning practices observed on the day of death derive from earliest biblical times, and it ascribes the establishment of the central seven day mourning period—*shivah*—to Moses (B. M.K. 34b, B. Ket. 25a). Concerned with maintaining the dignity of the deceased as well as of the living (B. San. 46b-47a), the rabbis of the Talmud record that three days are for weeping and seven are for lamenting (B. M.K. 27b). The number seven is derived from Amos 8:10, who says, "I will turn your feasts into mourning"—just as the feasts of Passover and Tabernacles are observed for seven days, so is mourning (B. M.K. 20). The Talmud even reports the observance of mourning for non-relatives: Ammi mourned thirty days for Yohanan (B. M.K. 25b), and it is said that one bares an arm and shoulder on the right side when mourning a brilliant scholar (*hakham*), the left side for the head of a bet din, and both sides for a prince (B. M.K. 22b). But indulging in excessive grief is forbidden, as it may cause a second tragedy; the Talmud recounts how one woman lost seven sons as a result of excessive mourning (B. M.K. 27b).

Judaism defines five distinct stages of mourning, allowing the individual systematically to cope with grief and gradually to reintegrate into the community. The first stage, *aninut*, is the period between death and burial. *Shivah* ("seven") is the following seven days, counted from the burial, during which period the mourners remain at home in the company of family and friends. Following *shivah*, a period ending thirty days

after the funeral (*shloshim*) marks the gradual transition to normal life, and a final stage, observed only for parents, comprises the remainder of the twelve month period after death. In this period, the mourner reestablishes regular patterns of life and work but continues internally to mourn. This year is deemed sufficient time to recover from the loss, and tradition, in fact, prohibits mourning beyond the twelve months. Mourning for a leader or after a national catastrophe, as well as on public fast days, follows many of the same strictures observed in personal mourning.

During the period of *aninut*, between death and interment, the mourner is called an *onen*. In this most intense period of grief, the individual's inward feeling of isolation is expressed through various outward observances and abstentions from life's pleasures. The *onen* abstains from the consumption of meat, wine, and liquor, does not attend any festive meal or party, and often eats alone. The *onen* refrains from self-adornment—wearing new clothes, shaving, cutting the hair, wearing jewelry, donning phylacteries—as well as from bathing for pleasure and engaging in sexual relations. The individual ceases to do business and to study Torah, which is considered enjoyment, and is released from the obligations of prayer as well as many other commandments, including reciting the blessing over bread and Grace after Meals. In this period, accordingly, the *onen* may not be counted as a member of a prayer-quorum. While, even in this period, outward mourning is not permitted on the Sabbath and festivals, which are days of peace and holiness, personal restrictions like bathing for pleasure, sexual relations, and Torah study remain in effect.

Keriah, "rending the garments," was traditionally practiced during this period. This is an outward sign of mourning as well as a psychological tool used to express grief. Rending normally takes place at any of three times: upon hearing of the death, before the funeral service, or at the cemetery; if this procedure is somehow neglected or forgotten, however, it is performed upon recognition of the omission. It is customary to rend the outer clothing that is worn indoors: vest, jacket, sweater, or tie for men; dress, blouse, or sweater for women. Clothes may be changed before the rending takes place, and it not considered appropriate to wear new clothes during mourning. The initial cut is typically made with a knife or scissors and then torn approximately three inches. For parents, one rends the left side over the heart, and for other relatives in a less conspicuous place on the right side. With the rending, the blessing that recognizes God as the true judge (*dayan ha-'emet*) is pronounced, emphasizing the justness of the divine decree.

Children are exempt from rending, as are those too physically or mentally ill to perform it correctly or to appreciate its significance. It is forbidden for a bride or groom to infringe on the joy felt during their first week of marriage by performing rending. Though typically performed only for one's immediate relatives or spouse, rending is sometimes performed for one's in-laws or by a divorcee. For parents, the rend is worn through *shivah* and may be worn during *shloshim*; other relatives are permitted to change from the rent clothing during *shivah*. Many liberal communities have adopted the practice of rending a ribbon that is then pinned onto the outer clothing in place of rending a garment.

Jewish tradition does not sanction any effort to comfort the bereaved during the funeral service (*leviat hamet*) and burial (*kavurah*), which are performed as soon after death as possible. Emphasis is placed instead on honoring the deceased through proper prayer, eulogy, and burial. Jewish funeral services are typically brief and may take place at a funeral parlor, home, synagogue, or cemetery. The service consists of a selection of Psalms, a eulogy, and the chanting of the memorial prayer (*malei rachamim*). Commonly included in the service is Ps. 23, which, because it speaks of the intimate relationship between humans and God, is considered appropriate. Additionally, lines such as "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no harm for you are with me" inspire hope in the bereaved. Also common is recitation of the collection of verses from various Psalms known as "What is man" and other Psalms

or readings appropriate to the individual's life. Often, for a woman, a selection from Proverbs known as "woman of valor" (*aishet hayil*) is recited.

In the eulogy, members of the family, close friends, or the officiating rabbi may address the community. The eulogy typically includes two elements: *hesped* (praising the deceased) and *bechi* (an expression of grief and loss). After the eulogy, the memorial prayer concludes the ceremony:

> O God full of compassion, you dwell on high! Grant perfect rest beneath the sheltering wings of your presence, among the holy and pure who shine as the brightness on the heavens, unto the soul of _____ who has gone unto eternity, and in whose memory charity is offered. May his repose be in paradise. May the Lord of mercy bring him under the cover of his wings forever, and may his soul be bound up in the bond of eternal life. May the Lord be his possession and may he rest in peace. Amen.

After the funeral service, the deceased is taken to the cemetery (fig. 98). Pallbearers are chosen from among the family and close friends, an important tribute to the dead. The somber funeral procession is considered an important last rite. Pallbearers typically escort the casket from the chapel to the hearse and, at the cemetery, from the hearse to the final resting place. During the procession, the bereaved walk behind the casket. Ps. 91 is recited and a number of pauses are made, symbolizing an unwillingness to end this final display of honor for the deceased. The passage *tziduk ha-din* ("justification of the divine decree") is said immediately before or just after interment, expressing acceptance of death. Family members, close friends, and honored members of the community usually begin the initial covering of the casket with dirt. Then a special burial kaddish—a doxology used often in Jewish liturgy—is recited, significantly different from other forms of this prayer in that it refers directly to resurrection of the dead.

Completion of the graveside service marks the transition from the period of *aninut* to *avelut*, in which the mourner begins to receive condolences. Traditionally, all present form two parallel lines through which the mourners pass. Those present greet the mourners with words of consolation: "May the Lord comfort you among the other mourners of Zion and Jerusalem." Upon exiting a graveyard, traditional Jews wash their hands in the ritual manner, having come into contact with the dead or, perhaps, as a way of saying that their hands are clean, that they have fulfilled all obligations attendant upon burial of the dead.

After burial, the mourners return home to a meal of condolence and begin the *shivah* observances, often referred to as "sitting *shivah*" because of the low stools, or "*shivah* benches," on which mourners traditionally sit. In general, relatives mourning together designate one location in which the mourning practices are observed, refereed to as a "*shivah* house." The *shivah* observance is obligatory for anyone mourning a parent, child, sibling, or spouse. It often takes place in the house of the deceased or in the home of one of the mourners. Because the observance holds that one must remain at home, surrounded by family and friends for an entire week, it remains a powerful ritual.

On the day of the funeral, the mourner typically fasts from dawn until after the burial, breaking the fast with a bland meal of bread, hard boiled eggs, cooked vegetables, and coffee or tea prepared by friends of the family. This meal, known as the meal of condolence, is an important time for the mourner to be with others, and it is not considered acceptable for one to prepare his or her own meal. Although, after interment, the most intense period of grief is considered to have passed, the meal is conducted in a solemn atmosphere. During this meal, as well as throughout the entire *shivah* week, it is customary for visitors not to speak until addressed by the mourner. It is considered inappropriate to ask a mourner how he or she feels, and the topic of conversation is generally confined to the virtues of the recently deceased. Candles are kindled and kept lit through the entire week to honor the memory of the dead. It customary to cover all mirrors in a house of mourning, for this is a time of isolation when the vanity of standing before a mirror is out of place.

At home for the entire week, the mourner is visited by members of the community.

Comforting mourners is an obligation referred to as *gemilut hasadim*, an expression of true kindness. Typically, the community or extended family also makes arrangements to provide meals for the mourner's family. Guests come to the house for daily services, and it is very important that enough people are present to constitute a prayer quorum, so that the mourner may recite the mourner's kaddish. It is customary for the family and close friends to be present the first two days of *shivah* and for others to visit on the following days.

After *shivah*, the mourner begins the transition to normal life. *Shloshim*, which ends the mourning observances for relatives other than parents, begins at the conclusion of *shivah* and continues until the thirtieth day after burial. One may return to daily routines, though it is customary to continue abstaining from wearing new clothes, cutting the hair, and bathing for pleasure until one begins to receive comments regarding his or her disheveled appearance. Depending on the level of observance and knowledge of the community, this period may vary significantly from place to place. While a mourner may return to work and other obligations, in this period he or she does not attend social functions.

After *shloshim*, one continues mourning a parent until the anniversary of the death, called the yahrzeit. In this period of mourning, the individual often sits in a different place in the synagogue, makes an extra effort to study Torah, to act meritoriously, give charity, and to lead worship services in honor of the dead. But the most notable observance of this period of mourning, as during the initial days, is the recitation of the mourner's kaddish. A dramatic prayer in Aramaic, the mourner's kaddish is recited at every service, even on the Sabbath and festivals, when other mourning rituals are not carried out. This kaddish may only be recited in the presence of a minyan; the mourner therefore must surround him or herself with others in order to fulfill this obligation to a deceased parent. While the obligation is considered to last for a full year, it is customary to cease saying kaddish after eleven months. Traditionally, the obligation to say kaddish falls upon the son, though liberal movements have encouraged women to recite the kaddish as well.

At the conclusion of the year of mourning, it is customary to unveil the tombstone of the deceased, though this may occur earlier. The monument honors the deceased, marking a place for visitation, and clearly indicating a place descendants of the priestly caste, who are not to come into contact with the dead, must avoid. Alongside the removal of a cloth from the tombstone, symbolizing its erection, the unveiling ceremony includes a recitation of Psalms, the *malei rachamim* memorial prayer, and the mourner's kaddish. While Judaism does not condone excessive grave visitation, it is customary to visit the dead on the concluding day of *shivah* or *shloshim*, as well as on the anniversary of the death, fast days, before the high holidays, the eve of the months of Nisan and Elul, and, in the case of the graves of parents, before marriage (fig. 99). Upon visiting a grave for the first time in thirty days, one recites the memorial prayer and Psalms and often dedicates time to study of the Mishnah. Many Jews place a pebble on the tombstone as tangible evidence of the visit. This custom possibly derives from the period when graves were marked by piles of rocks.

The anniversary of death, or yahrzeit, is observed annually. The memorial prayer is recited on the Sabbath before the yahrzeit, and, on the anniversary itself, a candle is lit in the home, extra prayer, reflection, and Torah study take place, and charity is given. Some Jews also fast on this day. A memorial service for all the dead, called Yizkor, is a fixed part of the liturgy on the Day of Atonement, Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles. Traditionally, these memorial prayers are recited only by those who have lost a parent, with all others leaving the sanctuary during this dramatic liturgical rite. Many Jews also light candles in their homes on the holidays on which Yizkor is said, just as on the anniversary of the death.

Besides personal mourning observances, Judaism has six fast days that are public days of mourning, universally observed in traditional communities. Only the Day of Atonement is of biblical origin, with the other five commemorating historical tragedies that befell the Jewish people. On the Day

of Atonement and Ninth of Ab (*tishah b'av*) one must abstain from eating, bathing, wearing cosmetics, wearing leather shoes, and engaging in marital relations from sundown until sundown the following day. The other days entail fasts that begin at sunrise; on these days, the other restrictions do not apply. The Fast of Esther commemorates the three day fast referred to at Esth. 4:16. The remaining four fast days commemorate the fall of Jerusalem. The seventeenth of Tammuz, first, marks the beginning of the fall of Jerusalem at the hands of the Romans. It also recalls the day Moses broke the tablets of the ten commandments, the burning of a Torah scroll and the erection of an idol in the Temple by the Greeks, and the Romans' forced cessation of the sacrificial cult. From this date and until the Ninth of Ab, three weeks of mourning are observed in commemoration of the fall of Jerusalem during the Roman siege. The Ninth of Ab itself then commemorates the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple; it is considered the saddest day of the Jewish year, especially as many other monumentally tragic events are associated with this day: the destruction of both Temples, King Edward's expulsion of the Jews from England in 1290, the Spanish Inquisition of 1492, and the outbreak of World War I. Finally, the fast of Gedaliah, commemorates the murder of a governor of Judah, and fast of the Tenth of Tevet commemorates the beginning of Nebuchadnezzar's siege of Jerusalem, which led to the destruction of the First Temple.

Throughout history, especially during the middle ages, various other public fasts were established and observed in varying locales, and although most are not observed today, personal fasts are observed on certain occasions, including in conjunction with an individual crisis or act of repentance. Two modern days of mourning also are observed by the world Jewish community: Holocaust Remembrance Day (*Yom haShoah*, 27 Nissan) commemorate the six million Jews murdered in Holocaust, and the Israeli Day of Remembrance (*Yom haZikkaron*, 4 Iyyar) commemorates the Israeli soldiers killed during Israel's War for Independence and subsequent battles for its existence.

WILLIAM SCOTT GREEN AND J. MISHKIN

NOTES

[1] For a complete discussion of this ritual, including the text of the ceremony, see CIRCUMCISION.

[2] For a complete discussion of the wedding liturgy, see LITURGY OF JUDAISM, CONTENT AND THEOLOGY.

[3] On this topic, see also CONVERSION.

[4] On this topic, see as well DEATH AND AFTERLIFE, JUDAIC DOCTRINES OF.

Liturgy of Judaism, Content and Theology

LIFE under the law means praying—morning, noon, night, and at meals—both routinely and when something unusual happens. As a Jew in the classical tradition, one lives life constantly aware of the presence of God and always ready to praise and bless God. The way of Torah is the way of perpetual devotion to God. Here we look into the substance of that devotion: for what do pious Jews ask when they pray? For what do they thank God?

We find that Judaism's liturgy of home and synagogue expresses the theology of classical Judaism. In every synagogue that addresses God in the words of the classical prayerbook and that privileges the Pentateuch and aspires to live by its law, the theology of the Oral Torah imparts shape and structure to holy Israel's address to God. There, in the practiced piety of worship, the Written Torah is mediated through the Oral, the act and attitude of prayer given theological substance by the sages' account of God and the world. The sages teach Israel how to pray and what to say.

In the first six centuries C.E., the sages in the Oral Torah worked to delimit the liturgy. The halakhah delineates the order of common worship, defining its principal parts. The aggadah contains compositions of prayers in the names of various sages, and some of these are incorporated into the

Siddur and Mahzor, the prayerbooks for daily worship, Sabbaths, and festivals, on the one side, and for the Days of Awe, on the other. But despite this Talmudic foundation, the detailed wording of both the Siddur and the Mahzor is first attested only centuries after the close of the Talmud of Babylonia. How, then, do we know that the liturgy of the Siddur and Mahzor, including rites of passage, in fact remains animated by the modes of thought characteristic of the sages of classical Judaism, who flourished some centuries before the liturgy reached the now-familiar wording?

The answer to this question will demonstrate that the liturgy indeed responds to the theology of the Oral Torah set forth by the sages of the Mishnah, Talmud, and Midrash. On the one hand, the intellectual traits of particular liturgies match modes of thought uniquely characteristic of the Oral Torah. On the other, liturgical motifs and themes join together in conformity to patterns established by the Oral Torah. These two traits demonstrate that the Oral Torah exercised a particular and highly distinctive—and therefore formative—influence upon the encounter between Israel and God in prayer.

The distinctive modes of thought characteristic of the sages but not of Scripture are evident in the remarkable power of the sages to recast history as paradigm. The sages reframed Scripture's history into laws governing the social order, turning events from singular, sequential, one-time and unique happenings into exemplary patterns. These encompass the past within the present and join future, present, and past onto a single plane of eternity. This mode of thought brings about the formation of liturgies in which all ages meet in one place, the great themes of existence coming together to reshape a very particular moment. That same mode of thought, moreover, insists on the union of the public and the private, the communal and the individual, all things subject to the same principle, explained in the same way.

The Wedding Liturgy

Two private liturgies realize the paradigmatic, as against the historical, mode of thought. First, this particularly Rabbinic mode of thought characterizes the prayer at the Jewish wedding, joining in one statement the motifs of creation, Adam, Eve, and Eden, the fall of Israel from the land of Israel, and the hoped-for restoration of humanity to Eden and Israel to Jerusalem and the Holy Land. The whole takes place out of time, in that "dream-time" that the Oral Torah creates. At a single moment all intersect. Here we find fully exposed the matter of life in that timeless world of an ever-present past. So too, the private and the public meet as well when a new family begins. Even as individual lover and beloved celebrate the uniqueness, the privacy of their love, they turn out to stand for Adam and Eve and to represent the very public hope for the restoration of Israel to the perfection of Eden in the Land. That imposes upon their love a heavy burden for the young, infatuated couple.

Here is where the liturgy utilizes theological modes of thought and casts them into moments of realization and reprise. What is striking is how the theme of Eden and alienation, land of Israel and exile, so typical of the theology of the Oral Torah, is reworked into a new pattern: from the loneliness and exile of the single life to the Eden and Jerusalem of the wedding canopy. The theme of exile and return is recapitulated, but now with the message that the joy of the bride and groom—standing, after all, for Israel and God—is a foretaste of what is last, that final reprise of creation, now in eternal perfection. The personal and the public join, the individuals before us embody and reenact the entirety of Israel's holy life, past to future:

> Praised are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Creator of the fruit of the vine.
>
> Praised are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who created all things for Your glory.
>
> Praised are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Creator of Adam.
>
> Praised are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who created man and

> woman in his image, fashioning woman from man as his mate, that together they might perpetuate life. Praised are You, O Lord, Creator of man.
>
> May Zion rejoice as her children are restored to her in joy. Praised are You, O Lord, who causes Zion to rejoice at her children's return.
>
> Grant perfect joy to these loving companions, as You did to the first man and woman in the Garden of Eden. Praised are You, O Lord, who grants the joy of bride and groom.
>
> Praised are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who created joy and gladness, bridge and groom, mirth, song, delight and rejoicing, love and harmony, peace and companionship. O Lord our God, may there ever be heard in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem voices of joy and gladness, voices of bridge and groom, the jubilant voices of those joined in marriage under the bridal canopy, the voices of young people feasting and signing. Praised are You, O Lord, who causes the groom to rejoice with his bride.[1]

The blessings speak of archetypical Israel, represented here and now by the bride and groom. They cover the great themes of the theology of the Oral Torah, excluding only one. We find creation, Adam, man and woman in God's image, after God's likeness; then comes the restoration of Israel to Zion; then the joy of Zion in her children and the loving companions in one another; then the evocation of the joy of the restoration—past, present, future, all in the here and now. The sole critical component of the theology of the Oral Torah omitted here concerns justice, on the one side, sin, repentance, and atonement, on the other, an omission that attests to sages' fine sense of what fits and what does not.

The theme of ancient paradise is introduced by the simple choice of the word *Adam*, just as we should expect. The myth of humanity's creation is rehearsed: man and woman are in God's image, together complete and whole, creators of life, "like God." Woman was fashioned from man together with him to perpetuate life. But this Adam and this Eve also are Israel, children of Zion the mother, as expressed in the fifth blessing. Israel is in exile, Zion lies in ruins. It is at that appropriate point that the resto-rationist motif enters: "Grant perfect joy to the loving companions," for they are creators of a new line in humankind—the new Adam, the new Eve; and their home—May it be the garden of Eden! And if joy is there, then "praised are you for the joy of bride and groom."

The concluding blessing returns to the theme of Jerusalem. Given the focus of the system as a whole, that hardly surprises. For the union of bridegroom and bride provides a foretaste of the new Eden that is coming. But that is only at the right moment, in the right setting, when Israel will have repented, atoned, and attained resurrection and therefore restoration to Eden, standing for the world to come. How is all this invoked? The liturgy conveys these motifs when it calls up the tragic hour of Jerusalem's first destruction. When everyone had given up hope, supposing with the end of Jerusalem had come the end of time, exile, the anti-Eden, only Jeremiah counseled renewed hope. With the enemy at the gate, he sang of coming gladness (Jer. 33:10–11):

> Thus says the Lord: In this place of which you say, "It is a waste, without man or beast," in the cities of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem that are desolate, without man or inhabitant or beast, there shall be heard again the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the voice of those who sing as they bring thank-offerings to the house of the Lord. . . . For I shall restore the fortunes of the land as at first, says the Lord.

The intersection of characteristic motifs creates a timeless tableau. Just as here and now there stand Adam and Eve, so here and now in this wedding, the olden sorrow having been rehearsed, we listen to the voice of gladness that is coming. The joy of this new creation prefigures the joy of the messiah's coming, inaugurating the resurrection and judgment and the final restoration. The joy then will echo the joy of bride and groom before us. So the small space covered by the marriage-canopy is crowded indeed with persons and events. People who think historically and not paradigmatically can commemorate and celebrate. But they cannot embody or exemplify eternity in the here and now, the presence and past and future all at once. In this context, only the sages of the Oral Torah have formed a

mode of thought that is capable of imagining such a convocation of persons and concatenation of events.

The Brit Milah

The same mode of thought marks other liturgies that celebrate events of the life-cycle. The entry of the male-child into the covenant of Abraham through the rite of circumcision, intensely personal (to the infant) and massively public (to all Israel), forms another moment of timeless eternity. Specifically, in the case of a boy, a minor surgical rite becomes the mark of the renewal of the agreement between God and Israel, the covenant carved into the flesh of the penis of every Jewish male. The beginning of a new life renews the rule that governs Israel's relationship to God. So the private joy is reworked through words of enchantment—once more, sanctification—and so transformed into renewal of the community of Israel and God. Those present find themselves in another time, another place. Specific moments out of the past are recapitulated and specific personalities called to attendance. In the present instant, eternity is invoked at the moment of cutting off the foreskin of the penis. Calling the rite *brit milah*, the covenant of, or effected through, circumcision, invites Abraham to attend. *Brit milah* seals with the blood of an infant the contract between Israel and God, generation by generation, son by son.

The spoken words of this rite evoke within the intimacy of private life that which all share together: Israel, its covenant with God, its origin in Abraham, Isaac, Jacob. In the rite, God sees the family beyond time, joined by blood not of pedigree but circumcision, genealogy framed by fifty generations of loyalty to the covenant in blood and birth from the union of the womb of an Israelite woman with semen from the circumcised penis of her Israelite husband: this is the holy fruit of the womb. Four aspects turn the operation into a rite. When the ceremony begins, the assembly and the circumcisor—the mohel—together recite Num. 25:10–12:

> The Lord spoke to Moses saying, Phineas, son of Eleazar, son of Aaron, the priest, has turned my wrath from the Israelites by displaying among them his passion for me, so that I did not wipe out the Israelite people in my passion. Say therefore I grant him my covenant of peace.

Commenting on this passage, Lifsa Schachter states, "Phineas is identified with zealously opposing the . . . sins of sexual licentiousness and idolatry. He is best known for an event which occurred when the Israelites, whoring with Moabite women in the desert, were drawn to the worship of Baal-Peor. . . . Phineas leaped into the fray and through an act of double murder . . . quieted God's terrible wrath."[2]

Now the so-called "chair of Elijah" is set, so that the rite is conceived to take place in the presence of the prophet. The newborn son is set on that chair, and the congregation says, "This is the chair of Elijah, of blessed memory." To understand the invocation of Elijah, we first recall the pertinent biblical passage, in which Elijah complained to God that the people of Israel had forsaken the covenant (1 Kgs. 19:10–14). This passage stands behind a story in a medieval document, Pirke deRabbi Eliezer, that Elijah attends the rite of circumcision of every Jewish boy:[3]

> The Israelites were wont to circumcise until they were divided into two kingdoms. The kingdom of Ephraim cast off from themselves the covenant of circumcision. Elijah, may he be remembered for good, arose and was zealous with a mighty passion, and he adjured the heavens to send down neither dew nor rain upon the earth. Jezebel heard about it and sought to slay him.
>
> Elijah arose and prayed before the Holy One, blessed be he. The Holy One, blessed be he, said to him, "'Are you better than your fathers' (1 Kgs. 19:4)? Esau sought to slay Jacob, but he fled before him, as it is said, 'And Jacob fled into the field of Aram' (Hos. 12:12).
>
> Elijah, may he be remembered for good, arose and fled from the land of Israel, and he betook himself to Mount Horeb, as it is said, "and he arose and ate and drank" (1 Kings 19:8).
>
> Then the Holy One, blessed be he, was revealed to him and said to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah"?

> He answered him saying, "I have been very zealous."
>
> The Holy One, blessed be he, said to him, "You are always zealous. You were zealous in Shittim on account of the immorality. For it is said, 'Phineas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, turned my wrath away from the children of Israel, in that he was zealous with my zeal among them' (Num. 25:11).
>
> "Here you are also zealous. By your life! They shall not observe the covenant of circumcision until you see it done with your own eyes."
>
> Hence the sages have instituted the custom that people should have a seat of honor for the messenger of the covenant; for Elijah, may he be remembered for good, is called the messenger of the covenant, as it is said, 'And the messenger of the covenant, whom you delight in, behold he comes' (Mal. 3:1).

Thus the prophet Elijah is present whenever a Jewish son enters the covenant of Abraham, which is circumcision, witnessing the loyalty of the Jews to the covenant. Elijah further serves as the guardian for the newborn, just as he raised the child of the widow from the dead (1 Kgs. 17:17–24). Celebrating with the family of the newborn are not "all Israel" in general but a very specific personage. The gesture of setting the chair sets the stage for an event in the life of the family not of the child alone but of all Israel. The chair of Elijah, filled by the one who holds the child, sets the newborn baby into Elijah's lap. The enchantment thus extends through the furnishing of the room.

In the actual surgical act, we move from gesture to formula, with the mohel reciting a blessing regarding the obligation of circumcision immediately before the rite and the father reciting a blessing concerning the covenant just afterward:

> Praised are you . . . who sanctified us with your commandments and commanded us to bring the son into the covenant of Abraham our father.

The explicit invocation of Abraham's covenant turns a concrete action in the here and now into a simile of the paradigm and archetype. To this, those present respond: "Just as he has entered the covenant, so may he be introduced to Torah, the *huppah* [marriage canopy] and good deeds." Schachter interprets these words as follows:

> Torah—as against idolatry; in the presence of Phineas. . . . huppah, as against sexual licentiousness; in the presence of Abraham . . . to good deeds: For I have singled him out that he may instruct his children and his posterity to keep the way of the Lord by doing what is just and right (Gen. 18:18).[4]

In the transformation of the now of the birth of the son into the then of Abraham's covenant with God, people make a public event of a private joy. As historical personages join the occasion—Elijah complaining to God, Abraham obediently circumcising his sons, Phineas, calming God's wrath by an act of violence, with whom a covenant of peace then is made—so the private becomes a continuation of the shared history and destiny of a people.

The operation completed, the blessing for wine is recited, introducing yet a further occasion of enchantment:

> Praised are you, Lord our God, who sanctified the beloved from the womb and set a statute into his very flesh, and his parts sealed with the sign of the holy covenant. On this account, living God, our portion and rock, save the beloved of our flesh from destruction, for the sake of his covenant placed in our flesh. Blessed are you . . . who makes the covenant.

In the rite of circumcision, the covenant thus is transformed from a generality to something specific, concrete, fleshly. It is, moreover, understood to accomplish a very specific goal—as all religion means to attain concrete purposes—to secure a place for the child, a blessing for the child. By virtue of the rite, the child enters the covenant, meaning that he joins that unseen "Israel" that through blood enters an agreement with God. As a result, the blessing of the covenant is owing to the child. For covenants or contracts cut both ways.

The Grace After Meals

So much for the way in which sages' mode of thought shapes the liturgy, imposing the pattern of an ever-present past upon the present and turning present-tense time into

a paradigm of what will be. What of those distinctive clusters of themes that the theology of the Oral Torah brings together?[5] A glance at the wedding liturgy defines what we should expect: Adam, creation, Israel, Zion; or joy, Jerusalem; or image of God, image of humankind. Other such clusters encompass Israel, gentile; this age, world to come; Eden, world to come; and so on. In fact, the Oral Torah yields a limited number of archetypal clusters, allowing for a nearly unlimited number of recombinations. But within the Oral Torah's theology, a certain few clusters suffice to animate the liturgy and supply its reference-points.

The theology of the Oral Torah combines many such components into a single narrative statement. Creation, revelation, redemption form one such paramount cluster; land, liberation, covenant, Torah, another; people of Israel, land of Israel, Jerusalem, restoration, a third. Above all, we must wonder, how do the several salvific symbols fit together in the larger mythic structure of creation, revelation, and redemption? In the Grace after Meals, recited whenever pious Jews eat bread, we see their interplay. To understand the setting, we must recall that in classical Judaism the table at which meals were eaten was regarded as the equivalent of the sacred altar in the Temple. Judaism taught that each Jew before eating had to attain the same state of ritual purity as the priest in the sacred act of making a sacrifice. So in the classic tradition, the Grace after Meals is recited in a sacerdotal circumstance. That is why the entire theology of the Oral Torah comes to realization in this simple liturgy:

> [1] Blessed art Thou, Lord our God, King of the Universe, who nourishes all the world by His goodness, in grace, in mercy, and in compassion: He gives bread to all flesh, for His mercy is everlasting. And because of His great goodness we have never lacked, and so may we never lack, sustenance—for the sake of His great Name. For He nourishes and feeds everyone, is good to all, and provides food for each one of the creatures He created.
>
> Blessed art Thou, O Lord, who feeds everyone.
>
> [2] We thank Thee, Lord our God, for having given our fathers as a heritage a pleasant, a good and spacious land; for having taken us out of the land of Egypt, for having redeemed us from the house of bondage; for Thy covenant, which Thou hast set as a seal in our flesh, for Thy Torah which Thou has taught us, for Thy statutes which Thou hast made known to us, for the life of grace and mercy Thou hast graciously bestowed upon us, and for the nourishment with which Thou dost nourish us and feed us always, every day, in every season, and every hour.
>
> For all these things, Lord our God, we thank and praise Thee; may Thy praises continually be in the mouth of every living thing, as it is written, And thou shalt eat and be satisfied, and bless the Lord thy God for the good land which He hath given thee.
>
> Blessed art Thou, O Lord, for the land and its food.
>
> [3] O Lord our God, have pity on Thy people Israel, on Thy city Jerusalem, on Zion the place of Thy glory, on the royal house of David Thy Messiah, and on the great and holy house which is called by Thy Name. Our God, our Father, feed us and speed us, nourish us and make us flourish, unstintingly, O Lord our God, speedily free us from all distress.
>
> And let us not, O Lord our God, find ourselves in need of gifts from flesh and blood, or of a loan from anyone save from Thy full, generous, abundant, wide-open hand; so we may never be humiliated, or put to shame.
>
> O rebuild Jerusalem, the holy city, speedily in our day. Blessed art Thou, Lord, who in mercy will rebuild Jerusalem. Amen.
>
> [4] Blessed art Thou, Lord our God, King of the Universe, Thou God, who art our Father, our powerful king, our creator and redeemer, who made us, our holy one, the holy one of Jacob, our shepherd, shepherd of Israel, the good king, who visits His goodness upon all; for every single day He has brought good, He does bring good, He will bring good upon us; He has rewarded us, does regard, and will always reward us, with grace, mercy and compassion, amplitude, deliverance and prosperity, blessing and salvation, comfort, and a living, sustenance, pity and peace, and all good—let us not want any manner of good whatever.[6]

The context of grace is enjoyment of creation, the arena for creation is the land. The land lay at the end of redemption from Egyptian bondage. Holding it, enjoying it is a sign that the covenant is intact and in force and that the people is loyal to its part of the contract and God to his. The land, the Exodus, the covenant—these all depend upon the Torah, statutes, and a life of grace

and mercy, here embodied in and evoked by the nourishment of the meal. Thanksgiving wells up, and the paragraph ends with praises for the land and its food.

This cluster on its own does not demand identification with the Oral Torah. The restorationist dynamic—Israel is to the Land as Adam is to Eden—is what signifies the hand of the sages. It is not merely a messianic prayer for the end of days, but a specific framing of the end in terms of the beginning, the restoration of the people Israel to the land of Israel, that the liturgy bespeaks. The restorationist theme recurs throughout, redemption and hope for return, and then future prosperity in the land: "May God pity the people, the city, Zion, the royal house of the Messiah, the Holy Temple." The nourishment of this meal is but a foretaste of the nourishment of the messianic time, just as the joy of the wedding is a foretaste of the messianic rejoicing. Creation and recreation, exile and return—these are the particular clusters that point to the substrate of the sages' theology.

The Shema

The primary claim of the Oral Torah concerns God's creation of a world order over chaos, and, specifically, a world ordered by justice, a world ruled by God himself, and a world that would recover its original perfection. Here, in the Shema, we find the Judaic creed exactly as sages will have defined it. That is to say, the themes that converge here and the way in which they are articulated respond to the distinctive theological structure and system put forth by the sages. In maintaining that the Oral Torah imparted its imprint upon all that came afterward, and that this is a matter not of historical influence based on political sponsorship but inner logic, I point to formations such as the one before us here, the creed contained in the twice-daily recitation of the Shema.

Evening and morning, the pious Jew proclaims the unity and uniqueness of God. The proclamation is preceded and followed by blessings: two at the beginning, then the recitation of the *Shema* itself, then one at the end, creating a sequence that adduces creation, revelation, proclamation of God's unity and dominion, then redemption. The recitation of the Shema is introduced by a celebration of God as creator of the world. God daily creates an orderly world, a world ordered in goodness. That is what is important about creation. While the recitation of the Shema varies slightly morning and night, as appropriate to the time of day, the message, the creation of world order, does not. In the morning, one says,

> Praised are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe.
> You fix the cycles of light and darkness;
> You ordain the order of all creation
> You cause light to shine over the earth;
> Your radiant mercy is upon its inhabitants.
> In Your goodness the work of creation
> Is continually renewed day by day. . . .
> O cause a new light to shine on Zion;
> May we all soon be worthy to behold its radiance.
> Praised are You, O Lord, Creator of the heavenly bodies.[7]

The blessing in the morning celebrates light, ending with the new light when creation is renewed. The corresponding prayer in the evening refers to the setting of the sun. The natural order of the world thus elicits thanks and praise of God, who created the world and who actively guides the daily events of nature. Whatever happens in nature gives testimony to the sovereignty of the creator. And that testimony takes place in the most ordinary events: the orderly regularity of sunrise and sunset.

Through the Torah, Israel knows God not merely as creator but purposeful creator. There Israel encounters God as just, world order as a formulation of the benevolent, beneficent laws of life. Torah is the mark not merely of divine sovereignty and justice, but of divine grace and love. So goes the second blessing:

> Deep is Your love for us, O Lord our God;
> Bounteous is Your compassion and tenderness.

Now comes the pronouncement of the character of the world order: reliable, guided by compassion, to be learned through God's self-manifestation in the Torah:

You taught our fathers the laws of life,
And they trusted in You, Father and king,
For their sake be gracious to us, and teach us,
That we may learn Your laws and trust in You.
Father, merciful Father, have compassion upon us:
Endow us with discernment and understanding.
Grant us the will to study Your Torah,
To heed its words and to teach its precepts. . . .
Enlighten our eyes in Your Torah,
Open our hearts to Your commandments. . . .
Unite our thoughts with singleness of purpose
To hold You in reverence and in love. . . .
You have drawn us close to You;
We praise You and thank You in truth.
With love do we thankfully proclaim Your unity.
And praise You who chose Your people Israel in love.[8]

God, the creator, revealed his will for creation through the Torah, given to Israel his people. That Torah contains the "laws of life."

In the Shema, Torah—instruction through revelation—leads to the chief teaching of revelation, the premise of world order, the dominion of the one and only God. In proclaiming the following words, Israel accepts the rule of God and the yoke of the dominion of heaven: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord Our God, the Lord is One." This proclamation is followed by three Scriptural passages. The first is Deut. 6:5–9:

> You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your might. And further, one must diligently teach one's children these words and talk of them everywhere and always, and place them on one's forehead, doorposts, and gates.

The second is Deut. 11:13–21, which emphasizes that if Jews keep the commandments, they will enjoy worldly blessings; but that, if they do not, they will be punished and disappear from the good land God gives them. The third is Num. 15:37–41, the commandment to wear fringes on the corners of one's garments.

Then comes the address to God, not as creator or revealer, but as redeemer. This prayer, predictably within the sages' framework, treats as comparable the redemption from Egypt and the redemption at the end of time, the one as the embodiment of the other:

You are our King and our father's King,
Our redeemer and our father's redeemer.
You are our creator. . . .
You have ever been our redeemer and deliverer
There can be no God but You. . . .

Now we turn to the initial formation of the paradigm of redemption, the liberation from Egypt, through the passage through the sea:

You, O Lord our God, rescued us from Egypt;
You redeemed us from the house of bondage. . . .
You split apart the waters of the Red Sea,
The faithful you rescued, the wicked drowned. . . .

As soon as redemption makes its appearance, the theme of arrogance and humility appears alongside, since, for sages, arrogance is the cause of sin and exile, humility elicits God's favor and brings about restoration:

He humbles the proud and raises the lowly;
He helps the needy and answers His people's call. . . .
Rock of Israel, arise to Israel's defense!
Fulfill Your promise to deliver Judah and Israel.
Our redeemer is the Holy One of Israel,
The Lord of hosts is His name.
Praised are You, O Lord, redeemer of Israel.[9]

That God not only creates but also redeems is embodied in the redemption from Egyptian bondage. The congregation repeats the exultant song of Moses and the people at the Red Sea as participants in the salvation of old and of time to come. The stories of creation, the Exodus from Egypt, and the revelation of Torah at Sinai are repeated, not merely to recount what once happened but to recreate out of the reworked materials of everyday life the "true being"—life as it was, always is, and will be forever.

The Eighteen Benedictions—Hear Our Prayer, Grant Us Peace

The Eighteen Benedictions—the Shemonah Esreh; also called the Amidah, "the standing

prayer"—are recited in the morning, noon, and evening prayers. Some of these eighteen, in particular those at the beginning and the end, recur in Sabbath and festival prayers as well. The Eighteen Benedictions initially are said by each worshipper silently. Each individual prays by and for himself or herself, but together with other silent, praying individuals. These benedictions then are repeated aloud by the prayer leader, for prayer is both private and public, individual and collective. To contemplate the meaning of these prayers one should imagine a room full of people, all standing by themselves yet in close proximity, some swaying this way and that, all addressing themselves directly and intimately to God in a whisper or in a low tone. They do not move their feet, for they are now standing before the king of kings, and it is not meet to shift and shuffle. If spoken to, they will not answer. Their attention is fixed upon the words of supplication, praise, and gratitude. When they begin, they bend their knees—so too toward the end—and at the conclusion they step back and withdraw from the divine presence. These, on ordinary days, are the words they say in the middle benedictions, which are specific to regular weekdays. The italicized words indicate the title of each subsequent benediction.

Wisdom-Repentance
You graciously endow man with intelligence;
You teach him knowledge and understanding.
Grant us knowledge, discernment, and wisdom.
Praised are You, O Lord, for the gift of knowledge.
Our Father, bring us back to Your Torah
Our King, draw us near to Your service;
Lead us back to you truly repentant.
Praised are You, O Lord, who welcomes repentance.
Forgiveness-Redemption
Our Father, forgive us, for we have sinned;
Our King, pardon us, for we have transgressed;
You forgive sin and pardon transgression.
Praised are You, gracious and forgiving Lord.
Behold our affliction and deliver us.
Redeem us soon for the sake of Your name,
For You are the mighty Redeemer.
Praised are You, O Lord, Redeemer of Israel.
Heal Us—Bless Our Years
Heal us, O Lord, and we shall be healed;
Help us and save us, for You are our glory.
Grant perfect healing for all our afflictions,
O faithful and merciful God of healing.
Praised are You, O Lord, Healer of His people.
O Lord our God! Make this a blessed year;
May its varied produce bring us happiness.
Bring blessing upon the whole earth.
Bless the year with Your abounding goodness.
Praised are You, O Lord, who blesses our years.
Gather Our Exiles—Reign Over Us
South the great shofar to herald [our] freedom;
Raise high the banner to gather all exiles;
Gather the dispersed from the corners of the earth.
Praised are You, O Lord, who gathers our exiles.
Restore our judges as in days of old;
Restore our counselors as in former times;
Remove from us sorrow and anguish.
Reign over us alone with loving kindness;
With justice and mercy sustain our cause.
Praised are You, O Lord, King who loves justice.
Humble the Arrogant-Sustain the Righteous
Frustrate the hopes of those who malign us;
Let all evil very soon disappear;
Let all Your enemies be speedily destroyed.
May You quickly uproot and crush the arrogant;
May You subdue and humble them in our time.
Praised are You, O Lord, who humbles the arrogant.
Let Your tender mercies, O Lord God, be stirred
For the righteous, the pious, the leaders of Israel,
Toward devoted scholars and faithful proselytes.
Be merciful to us of the house of Israel;
Reward all who trust in You;
Cast our lot with those who are faithful to You.
May we never come to despair, for our trust is in You.
Praised are You, O Lord, who sustains the righteous.
Favor Your City and Your People
Have mercy, O Lord, and return to Jerusalem, Your city;
May Your Presence dwell there as You promised.
Rebuild it now, in our days and for all time;
Re-establish there the majesty of David, Your servant.
Praised are You, O Lord, who rebuilds Jerusalem.

Bring to flower the shoot of Your servant David.
Hasten the advent of the Messianic redemption;
Each and every day we hope for Your deliverance.
Praised are You, O Lord, who assures our deliverance.
O Lord, our God, hear our cry!
Have compassion upon us and pity us;
Accept our prayer with loving favor.
You, O God, listen to entreaty and prayer.
O King, do not turn us away unanswered,
For You mercifully heed Your people's supplication.
Praised are You, O Lord, who is attentive to prayer.
O Lord, Our God, favor Your people Israel;
Accept with love Israel's offering of prayer;
May our worship be ever acceptable to You.
May our eyes witness Your return in mercy to Zion.
Praised are You, O Lord, whose Presence returns to Zion.
Our Thankfulness
We thank You, O Lord our God and God of our fathers,
Defender of our lives, Shield of our safety;
Through all generations we thank You and praise You.
Our lives are in Your hands, our souls in Your charge.
We thank You for the miracles which daily attend us,
For Your wonders and favor morning, noon, and night.
You are beneficent with boundless mercy and love.
From of old we have always placed our hope in You.
For all these blessings, O our King,
We shall ever praise and exalt You.
Every living creature thanks You, and praises You in truth.
O God, You are our deliverance and our help. Selah!
Praised are You, O Lord, for Your Goodness and Your glory.
Peace and Well-Being
Grant peace and well-being to the whole house of Israel;
Give us of Your grace, Your love, and Your mercy.
Bless us all, O our Father, with the light of Your Presence.
It is Your light that revealed to us Your life-giving Torah,
And taught us love and tenderness, justice, mercy, and peace.
May it please You to bless Your people in every season,
To bless them at all times with Your light of peace.
Praised are You, O Lord, who blesses Israel with peace.[10]

The first two petitions pertain to intelligence. Jews thank God for mind: knowledge, wisdom, discernment. But knowledge is for a purpose, and the purpose here is knowledge of Torah. Such discernment leads to the service of God and produces a spirit of repentance. We cannot pray without setting ourselves right with God, and that means repenting for what has separated us from God. Torah is the way to repentance and to return. So knowledge leads to Torah, Torah to repentance, and repentance to God. The logical next stop is the prayer for forgiveness. That is the sign of return. God forgives sin; God is gracious and forgiving. Once we discern what we have done wrong, through the guidance of Torah we seek to be forgiven. For sin leads to affliction, and affliction stands at the beginning of the way to God; once we have taken that way, we ask for our suffering to end; we beg redemption. This is then specified as we ask for healing, salvation, a blessed year. Healing without prosperity means we may suffer in good health or starve in a robust body. So along with the prayer for healing goes the supplication for worldly comfort.

The individual's task is done. But what of the community? Health and comfort are not enough. The world is unredeemed. Jews are enslaved, in exile, and alien. At the end of days a great shofar, or ram's horn, will sound to herald the messiah's coming. This is now besought. The Jewish people at prayer ask first for the proclamation of freedom, then for the ingathering of the exiles to the Promised Land. Establishing the messianic-kingdom, God needs also to restore a wise and benevolent government, good judges, good counselors, and loving justice.

Meanwhile Israel, the Jewish people, finds itself maligned. As the prayer sees things, the arrogant, hating Israel, hate God as well. They should be humbled. And the pious and righteous—the scholars, the faithful proselytes, the whole house of Israel that trusts in God—should be rewarded and sustained. Above all, God is asked to remember Jerusalem, to rebuild the city and again dwell there, setting up Jerusalem's messianic king, David, and making him prosper.

These are the themes of the daily prayer: personal atonement, good health, and good

fortune; collective redemption, freedom, the end of alienation, good government, and true justice; the final and complete salvation of the Land and of Jerusalem by the messiah. At the end comes a prayer that prayer may be heard and found acceptable; then an expression of thanksgiving, not for what may come, but for the miracles and mercies already enjoyed morning, noon, and night. And at the end is the prayer for peace—a peace that consists of wholeness for the sacred community.

People who say such prayers do not wholly devote themselves to this world. True, they ask for peace, health, and prosperity. But these are transient. At the same moment they ask, in so many different ways, for eternity. They arise in the morning and speak of Jerusalem. At noon they make mention of the messiah. In the evening they end the day with talk of the shofar to herald freedom and the ingathering of the exiles. Living here in the profane, alien world, they constantly talk of going there—to the Holy Land and its perfect society. They address themselves to the end of days and the messiah's time. The praying community above all seeks the fulfillment and end of its—and humanity's—travail.

New Year and the Day of Atonement

Another most important liturgical exercise in reworking sages' theology brings us to the main principle of world order, God's just rule over creation. No more eloquent and powerful statement of that principle occurs than in the liturgy of the New Year—Rosh Hashanah—and the Day of Atonement—Yom Kippur—which together mark the Days of Awe, of solemn penitence, at the start of the autumn festival season. These occasions work out in concrete terms how the world order of justice extends to the here and now of patterned, orderly, everyday life. For on the first of these occasions, the New Year, each person is inscribed for life or death in the heavenly books for the coming year, and on the Day of Atonement the books are sealed. The synagogues on that day are filled with penitents. The New Year is called the birthday of the world: "This day the world was born." It is likewise a day of remembrance on which the deeds of all creatures are reviewed. On it God asserts his sovereignty:

> Our God and God of our Fathers, Rule over the whole world in Your honor . . . and appear in Your glorious might to all those who dwell in the civilization of Your world, so that everything made will know that You made it, and every creature discern that You have created him, so that all in whose nostrils is breath may say, "The Lord, the God of Israel is king, and His kingdom extends over all."[11]

The themes of the liturgy are divine sovereignty, divine memory, and divine disclosure. These correspond to creation, revelation, and redemption. Sovereignty is established by creation of the world. Judgment depends upon law: "From the beginning You made this, Your purpose known. . . ." And therefore, since people have been told what God requires of them, they are judged:

> On this day sentence is passed upon countries, which to the sword and which to peace, which to famine and which to plenty, and each creature is judged today for life or death. Who is not judged on this day? For the remembrance of every creature comes before You, each man's deeds and destiny, words and way. . . .

The theme of revelation is further combined with redemption; the shofar, sounded in the synagogue during daily worship for a month before Rosh Hashanah, serves to unite the two:

> You did reveal yourself in a cloud of glory. . . . Out of heaven you made them [Israel] hear Your voice. . . . Amid thunder and lightning You revealed yourself to them, and while the shofar sounded You shined forth upon them. . . . Our God and God of our fathers, sound the great ram's horn for our freedom. Lift up the ensign to gather our exiles. . . . Lead us happily to Zion Your city, Jerusalem the place of Your sanctuary.

The complex themes of the New Year, the most "theological" of Jewish holy occasions, thus recapitulate a familiar cluster of motifs.

The most personal, solemn, and moving of the Days of Awe is the Day of Atonement, the Sabbath of Sabbaths, marked by

fasting and continuous prayer. On it, the Jew makes confession:

> Our God and God of our fathers, may our prayer come before You. Do not hide yourself from our supplication, for we are not so arrogant or stiff-necked as to say before You. . . . We are righteous and have not sinned. But we have sinned.
> We are guilt laden, we have been faithless, we have robbed. . . .
> We have committed iniquity, caused unrighteousness, have been presumptuous. We have counseled evil, scoffed, revolted, blasphemed. . . .[12]

The confession is built upon an alphabetical acrostic following the letters of the Hebrew alphabet, as if by making certain every letter is represented, God, who knows human secrets, will combine them into appropriate words. The very alphabet bears witness against us before God. Then:

> What shall we say before You who dwell on high? What shall we tell You who live in heaven? Do You not know all things, both the hidden and the revealed? You know the secrets of eternity, the most hidden mysteries of life. You search the innermost recesses, testing men's feelings and heart. Nothing is concealed from You or hidden from Your eyes. May it therefore be Your will to forgive us our sins, to pardon us for our iniquities, to grant remission for our transgressions.[13]

A further list of sins follows, again built on alphabetical lines. Prayers to be spoken by the congregation are all in the plural: "For the sin which we have sinned against You with the utterance of the lips. . . . For the sin which we have sinned before You openly and secretly. . . ." The community takes upon itself responsibility for all that is done in it. All Israel is part of one community, one body, and all are responsible for the acts of each. The sins confessed are mostly against society, against one's fellow; few pertain to ritual laws. At the end comes a final word:

> O my God, before I was formed, I was nothing. Not that I have been formed, it is as though I had not been formed, for I am dust in my life, more so after death. Behold I am before You like a vessel filled with shame and confusion. May it be Your will . . . that I may no more sin, and forgive the sins I have already committed in Your abundant compassion.[14]

Israelites, within all Israel, see themselves before the just and merciful God: possessing no merits, yet hopeful of God's love and compassion.

Alenu

Every synagogue service concludes with a prayer prior to going forth, called *Alenu* from its first word in Hebrew. Like the Exodus, the moment of the congregation's departure becomes a celebration of Israel's God, a self-conscious, articulated rehearsal of Israel's peoplehood. But now it is the end, rather than the beginning, of time that is important. When Jews go forth, they look forward:

> Let us praise Him, Lord over all the world;
>
> Let us acclaim Him, Author of all creation.
> He made our lot unlike that of other peoples;
> He assigned to us a unique destiny.
> We bend the knee, worship, and acknowledge
> The King of kings, the Holy One, praised is He.
> He unrolled the heavens and established the earth;
> His throne of glory is in the heavens above;
> His majestic Presence is in the loftiest heights.
> He and no other is God and faithful King,
> Even as we are told in His Torah:
> Remember now and always, that the Lord is God;
> Remember, no other is Lord of heaven and earth.
> We, therefore, hope in You, O Lord our God,
> That we shall soon see the triumph of Your might,
> That idolatry shall be removed from the earth,
> And false gods shall be utterly destroyed.
> Then will the world be a true kingdom of God,
> When all mankind will invoke Your name,
> And all the earth's wicked will return to You.
> Then all the inhabitants of the world will surely know
> That to You every knee must bend,
> Every tongue must pledge loyalty.
> Before You, O Lord, let them bow in worship,
> Let them give honor to Your glory.
> May they all accept the rule of Your kingdom.
> May You reign over them soon through all time.
> Sovereignty is Yours in glory, now and forever.
> So it is written in Your Torah:
> The Lord shall reign for ever and ever.[15]

In secular terms, Jews know that in some ways they form a separate, distinct group. In mythical reality they thank God they enjoy a unique destiny. They do not conclude with thanks for their particular being, but sing of hope merely that the God who made their lot unlike that of all others will soon rule as sovereign over all. The secular difference, the unique destiny, is temporary. When the destiny is fulfilled, there will be no further difference. The natural eye beholds a social group with some particular cultural characteristics defining that group. The myth of peoplehood transforms *difference* into *destiny*.

Conclusion

A single, seamless statement, the Siddur and Mahzor, the Oral Torah and the Written Torah, severally and jointly say the same few things. That is why the worship of home and synagogue, with its enchanted and timeless world of ever-present eternity, is beyond all comprehending except within the framework of the Oral part of the Torah. But so too, sages will have insisted, the Oral part of the Torah for its part restates precisely the message, in exact balance and proportion, of the Written part. It too makes sense only within the framework of the Written part of the Torah. So, in sequence, the sages read from the Written Torah to the Oral one. And, reflecting on that reading, the theologians of the liturgy composed prayer to re-frame in the second-person "you" of prayer personally addressed to the person of God precisely the result of that same reading: what the Torah teaches about God, Israel brings in prayer to God.

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Notes

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[2] Lifsa Schachter, "Reflections on the Brit Mila Ceremony," in *Conservative Judaism* 1986, 38, pp. 38–41.

[3] *Pirke deRabbi Eliezer*, trans. Gerald Friedlander (London, 1916), pp. 212–214.

[4] Op. cit., p. 41.

[5] In *The Theological Grammar of the Oral Torah* (Binghamton, 1997), II. *Syntax: Connections and Constructions*, I have catalogued one hundred fifty of them.

[6] Judah Goldin, trans., *The Grace After Meals* (New York, 1955), pp. 9, 15ff.

[7] *Weekday Prayer Book*, ed. by the Rabbinical Assembly of American Prayerbook Committee, Rabbi Jules Harlow, Secretary (New York, 1962), p. 42.

[8] Ibid., pp. 45–56.

[9] Ibid., pp. 50ff.

[10] *Weekday Prayer Book*, ed. by the Rabbinical Assembly of America Prayerbook Committee, Rabbi Jules Harlow, Secretary (New York: Rabbinical Assembly, 1962).

[11] Traditional prayer; author's translation from the Hebrew.

[12] Jules Harlow, trans., *Mahzor* (New York, rep. 1995).

[13] Ibid.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Ibid., pp. 97–98.

Liturgy of Judaism, History and Form

The general term Jewish worship refers more specifically to Rabbinic worship, that is, the system of worship codified by the generations of authorities known loosely as "the rabbis." While Rabbinic myths date some liturgical customs as far back as Moses and even the patriarchs, it is in fact difficult to establish the existence of even elementary Rabbinic worship prior to the second century B.C.E. Only in the first century C.E. does the character of Rabbinic worship come clearly into focus. In particular we find that the Tannaim (c. 70–200 C.E.) are responsible for the structure of Rabbinic worship, while the much later Geonim (c. 757–1038) are responsible for canonizing a particular set of prayers that remains the liturgy of preference for later generations.

Scholars once believed that Jewish liturgy emerged from methodical Tannaitic

consultations, arranged by authoritative Jewish central bodies, and representing a monolithic Rabbinic will. Philologists thus sought out putative "original texts" of prayer from which current variations had grown, and they attempted to determine the exact dates and circumstances that gave rise each incremental development. We now know that the Tannaim were a diverse group with often ineffective centralized authority; that despite general agreement on certain principles, variation of interpretation was the rule; and that, consequently, there are no single authoritative "original" prayers to be found. Instead, Tannaitic (and even Amoraic) worship is characterized by relatively freewheeling expressions of specific worship themes. There apparently was an abundance of equally old prayer texts, most of which have been lost to history.

Three institutions especially contributed to the earliest Rabbinic worship: the Temple, the *chavurah* and the synagogue. The Temple's destruction in 70 C.E. coincided with the earliest Tannaim who therefore knew its worship forms, and respected them as scripturally ordained. Succeeding Rabbinic generations accepted the Temple's sacrificial system as paradigmatic for ideal worship and looked forward to a rebuilt Temple with a restored cult at the end of time. Until then, they consciously modeled their own worship after real or imaginary cultic blueprints, characterizing prayer itself, for example, as "an offering of the lips," and announcing that the primary Rabbinic prayer, the *Tefillah*, had replaced the defunct *Tamid* or daily sacrifice.

Nonetheless, two alternative loci for worship, the *chavurah* and the synagogue, both of which had predated the Temple's fall, now rose to prominence. The *chavurah* (pl. *chavurot*) appears in our records by Pharisaic times. *Chavurot* are table-fellowship groups emphasizing worship around meals and featuring purity rules that liken average Israelites to priests and the table at which a meal is eaten to the Temple alter. They were either *ad hoc* gatherings or ongoing associations to celebrate such things as feast days and the birth of children. Out of this milieu grew the Passover*seder*, benedictions over food, and the grace after meals (*birkat hamazon*).

The synagogue too predates the Temple's fall, but not by the many centuries often imagined. Evident in the Gospels, and known both to Paul and to Josephus, the synagogue must have been well established by the first century C.E. But neither written nor archeological data indicate origins much prior to that, certainly not before the second century B.C.E. Sources prior to the Hasmonean revolt (167 B.C.E.)—including Daniel, written on its very eve—are alike in knowing nothing of synagogues, which, therefore can certainly *not* be dated to the Babylonian exile, as is often claimed.

Texts reflecting conditions in the second and first centuries B.C.E. portray public worship also in village squares under the institutional aegis of a *maʿamad*. The *maʿamad* is described as an extension of the cult, that is, a local gathering at the time that the sacrifices were being offered in Jerusalem; but we hear also of a liturgy there, including the recitation of a *Tefillah* (the Rabbinic prayer *par excellence*) intended to achieve relief from drought. Earlier theory sometimes saw the synagogue as arising out of the *maʿamad*, though it now appears more likely that the synagogue was originally an unrelated, more general communal gathering place to which only eventually Rabbinic worship became attached.

We know little about the relationship of the rabbis to the early synagogue, but they seem at first to have preferred other institutions, especially the study milieu, for their prayers. The *maʿamad* ritual had been led by Elders (*zekenim*), and early synagogue worship was conducted by a new functionary, the *chazzan* (pl. *chazzanim*), a term used today for the synagogue cantor. But synagogue ritual was increasingly dominated by rabbis, to the point where today it is assumed (falsely) to have been the rabbis' place of prayer from the outset.

The synagogue and the *chavurah* (one's home) thus became twin liturgical foci following the Temple's fall. Though Jews can and do pray elsewhere, worship is normally enacted at set times in either or both of these locales, three times daily (see below) and even more extensively on holy days (figs. 100–102).

The Liturgical Text, the Primacy of the Blessing

Rabbinic prayers hark back to biblical prototypes, but they are unique in that they feature a standardized prose style known as a *berakhah*, that is, a blessing or benediction. Stylistic rules for framing benedictions evolved through the centuries, but were largely in place by the third century C.E. Blessings are either short or long. Short blessings are one-line formulas, beginning, "Blessed art Thou, Lord our God, Ruler of the Universe, who. . . ." Long blessings may or may not feature the introduction ("Blessed art Thou. . . ."), but they always conclude with a *chatimah* (lit.: "seal") that sums up the blessing's theme; they are "long" in that the body of the blessing develops its theme, becoming, in essence, a small essay on some aspect of Rabbinic thought. Worship services comprise a variety of verbal material, but feature clusters of blessings strung one after the other. Of these, the following two stand out: the blessings that surround the *Shema* and the *Tefillah*, which are discussed below.

These "blessing-essays" are not the product of single authors; they are composite works reflecting centuries of oral transmission and editorial redaction. They thus betray the fact that the Rabbinic tradition is far from monolithic. One major strand, for example, is Jewish gnosticism (known generally as the praxis of *Yordei Merkavah*, the "Chariot" or "Throne" mystics) which from as early as the second or third centuries C.E. emphasized mantra-like formulas, word strings of synonyms that produced rhythmic regularity without any necessary cognitive enrichment; sometimes accompanied by fasting and body movement, this worship was trance-inducing, the goal being to join the heavenly angels seen by Isaiah (chap. 6), and to praise God with them.

At the same time, other Rabbinic strands stressed the cognitive pole of meaning, by mandating regular worship organized according to set themes. Indeed, for centuries, it was this unvarying thematic progression that identified worship as properly Rabbinic despite its many verbal manifestations in different synagogues. Generally speaking, each theme was allotted its own blessing, the style of which allowed for great variation, in that even after the basic rules for beginning and ending the blessing were in place, there still remained the blessing's body where the theme could be elaborated freely. Thus, expression of themes varied widely from place to place and even from time to time in the same place, as prayer leaders exercised considerable imagination in their renditions. Regardless of the vast differences in wording that resulted, however, the same *order* of blessings and, thus, the same progression of themes was the rule, so that even a highly unusual version of a worship service would be recognizable as just one more interesting delivery of the appropriate thematic elements.

From Unfixed Text to Prayer Book

Somewhere between the third and the eighth centuries the various strands of prayer coalesced into fixed liturgies. Lengthy poetic renditions known as *piyyutim* that originally, perhaps, were everyday alternatives used to express the benedictory themes, were eventually reserved for fast or feast days. The mystical mantra-like strata were combined with information-rich theological expressions of the themes. These developments produced final formulations of composite texts betraying both the affective and the cognitive poles of worship. Several such amalgams persisted for centuries, with two recognizable clusters of them taking shape: the Palestinian rite in Palestine and Egypt, and the Babylonian rite in the Tigris-Euphrates basin. The former remained particularly rich in poetry, preferring to continue the age-old tradition of encouraging novel expressions of the mandated blessings at the expense of a single "canonized" prayer text. The latter, however, chose fixity as its goal. It limited poetry to a bare minimum and established set texts to be recited from beginning to end of the standard worship services.

In the middle of the ninth century, Amram, the titular religious leader of Babylonian Jewry, announced his own particular set of

texts as incumbent on all Jews. His decree, our first known comprehensive prayer book, is known as *Seder Rav Amram* ("The *Seder* [or order of prayers according to] Rav Amram"). It was accepted as normative by the young Jewish communities and in western Europe especially it eventually became the basis for all subsequent rites. Its power emerged in particular in the wake of Palestinian Jewry's destruction at the hands of the Crusaders and in light of the parallel success of the Babylonian legal tradition, which established Babylonia's cultural hegemony over its Palestinian parallel.

While *Seder Rav Amram* contained all Babylonian-required prayer texts for home and synagogue devotion, along with their legal (*halakhic*) regulations, it consciously omitted the Palestinian alternatives. Jewish worship was henceforth associated with the act of reading one's way through relevant paragraphs of a book, following the requisite guidelines regarding such things as bodily position, congregation/prayer-leader antiphony, and musical rendition. In the centuries that followed, the book was expanded with new poetry expressive of this or that community's identity. But before turning to these expansions, we should look briefly at the contents of *Seder Rav Amram's* basic service, since it was to remain the essential outline of Jewish worship in all forms of Judaism to this day.

Outline of Services, Structure and Theology

As an apt continuator of Rabbinic tradition, *Seder Rav Amram* does *not* feature texts of the Bible among its prayers. True, biblical citations abound: three of them (Deut. 6:4–9; 11:13–21; Num. 15:37–41) constitute the well-known *Shema Yisrael*, which is recited morning and evening; and psalms too appear here and there in their totality, especially in the psalm collections known as *Hallel*. But biblical snippets are generally embedded transcontextually in Rabbinic blessings, which redefine them according to Rabbinic interpretations. Even the *Shema* has been recast as only a centerpiece bracketed by introductory and concluding blessings; and psalmody is decidedly insignificant here, relative to the blessing structure that predominates. The theology of Rabbinic worship thus reflects the Rabbinic doctrine that the written Bible requires interpretation according to the insights of the oral tradition.

The most important worship units are (1) the *Shema* and its benedictions and (2) the *Tefillah*, "The Prayer [*par excellence*]," which singly or together have constituted the bulk of every synagogue service since the first century C.E., at least.

The *Shema* resembles a Jewish creed in which the assertion of God's unity is elaborated through the accompanying blessings that acknowledge God as (1) *Creator* of light and darkness, (2) *Revealer* of Torah (i.e., *Covenant-maker* with Israel), and (3) *Redeemer* of Israel from Egyptian bondage. God is thus the sole deity, responsible for creation, revelation, and redemption. Historical recollection is linked to eschatology, in that God's redeeming act at the Red Sea is the archetype for Israel's final deliverance at the end of created time when the covenant's promise comes ultimately to its fruition.

Eschatological hope figures even more prominently in the *Tefillah*, a series of nineteen (originally eighteen) benedictions, largely petitionary, organized at the end of the first century. God is asked to grant the necessary insight that leads to repentance and thus to divine pardon and salvation. The blessings that follow define the paradigmatic Rabbinic doctrine of salvation: God will heal the sick, restore fertility to the Land of Israel, return the exiles to their Land, reestablish the Jewish justice system, punish heretics, reward the righteous, rebuild Jerusalem, and bring the messiah son of David to rule in perfect peace.

Along with the *Shema* and the *Tefillah*, early worship featured the reading of the Torah (the first five books of the Bible), on Mondays, Thursdays, and Sabbaths. More than one lectionary seems to have been in effect: Palestinians favored the so-called triennial cycle (actually, a three and a half to four year cycle, despite its title), while Babylonian Jewry developed an annual cycle, which prevails today as a consequence of the Babylonian cultural victory typified by *Seder Rav Amram*. Sabbath mornings saw an

additional reading (called *Haftarah*) drawn from the prophets (and the narrative books, like 1 and 2 Sam. or 1 and 2 Kgs., known also as "prophets" in Jewish tradition), and linked in some way to the primary Torah text. The reading of scripture was customarily followed by an interpretive sermon which ended with a *nechemta* (a word of hope), and then, with the *Kaddish*, a prayer calling for the coming of the reign of God. By the eighth century, the *Kaddish* was associated with mourning and assumed to benefit the dead, but its earliest appearance is as a concluding prayer to the study of Torah.

The rabbis favored private spirituality as well, and thus introduced benedictions (usually the short ones) as a means of injecting religious significance into everyday events, as disparate as eating an apple, seeing a rainbow, and going to the bathroom (at which time one was to marvel at and thank God for the system of ducts and tubes that constitute the human body). Similarly, benedictions preceded the performance of commandments (or *mitzvot*, sing.: *mitzvah*), affirming that the act about to be performed—kindling Chanukah lights, perhaps, or performing a circumcision—was of covenantal magnitude. Perhaps the most significant *mitzvah* was the study of Torah, understood generically as the ongoing revelation of God's word, and including both written scripture and oral tradition. Rabbinic spirituality favored such study every morning upon awakening, especially with texts describing the defunct Temple cult, as if reading about sacrifice was the next best thing to doing it. In his *Seder*, Amram included a particular collection of all such texts—the Bible and the rabbis on sacrifice, blessings over the *mitzvah* of Torah study, and benedictions related to the daily miracle of waking up to the world. But he appended these to the beginning of his synagogue liturgy, thus transforming home devotion into preliminary synagogue meditation and study. There it remains to this day, as does a second sort of introductory material Amram included: songs of praise highlighted by a *Hallel* (Pss. 145–150), and intended as preparatory "warm-up" for the statutory *Shema* and *Tefillah*, which remain the most significant rubrics of the daily service.

We saw above the petition for salvation, as defined in the *Tefillah* and as represented in the metaphor of the ultimate reign of God (from the *Kaddish*). But the arrival of God's promised realm presupposes the prior forgiveness of sin. The Amoraim, or rabbis of the Talmud (c. 200–550), thus suggested a daily confession following the *Tefillah*. Amram went further, including not only the opportunity for private devotion there, but also an official Supplication rubric (the *Tachanun*), composed of a collection of prayers acknowledging the lowliness of the human condition. These supplications later grew in importance among western European *Chasidei Ashkenaz* (see below), but were already present in Amram's *Seder*, as an apt continuation of the Amoraic religious anthropology that he inherited.

Thus, with but one exception, the *Alenu*, the major prayers of the daily morning service were in place by Amram's day. Beginning with (1) morning blessings and the study of texts about sacrifice, the worshipper then recited (2) a warm-up *Hallel* (psalms and songs of praise). These introduced the centrally significant (3) *Shema* and its blessings, and (4) *Tefillah*. The *Tefillah*, technically a replacement for the Temple *Tamid* sacrifice, conjured up the cult's penitential function, and led to (5) private prayer, especially the supplicatory *Tachanun*. On appropriate days, (6) scripture and (7) a sermon followed, but in any case (8) a concluding *Kaddish*, calling for God's promised reign on earth, was normative. The only important addition over the years has been the *Alenu*, composed originally as an introduction to Rosh Hashanah's blowing of the *Shofar*, but by the fourteenth century added to the concluding prayers. It too calls for God's ultimate reign on earth.

With slight alteration, the above outline of daily morning prayer (*shacharit*) characterizes every other synagogue service. Mandated afternoon (*minchah*) and evening (*ʿarvit* or *maʿariv*) services featuring similar liturgies have by now coalesced into back-to-back services held at sunset. These daily occasions are suitably altered for Sabbaths, fasts, and festivals, when, in addition, the home as worship-setting usually looms larger than the daily norm. Thus, for example, Passover calls for additional synagogue poetry on the

theme of the Exodus; but it also features the home *seder* ritual with family and friends. Home liturgy for Sabbaths and holy days include, above all, (1) the kindling of lights, along with a prayer called *Kiddush*, an announcement of the onset of sacred time; and (2) a *Havdalah* (or "separation") ceremony marking a "separation" between sacred and secular time, as the Sabbath or festival ends.

Medieval Developments in Europe, Structure and Theology

Seder Rav Amram was followed by a second comprehensive prayer book, *Siddur Saadiah*, a compendium by the renowned tenth century philosopher, exegete, poet and polemicist: Saadiah Gaon. Yet a third such book, no longer extant, is attributed to the last Gaon of our period, Hai (d. 1038). But Amram, especially, made an impact on all Europeans, who patterned their worship after his instructions and text. A broad division of rites into "Sefardic" as opposed to "Ashkenazic" differentiates later developments in the Iberian peninsula (*Sefarad*) from those in Northern Europe (France and Germany, known together as *Ashkenaz*). In both places, however, the texts grew in bulk as Spanish, French, German, and other Jews composed poetic additions, especially for holy days. In fourteenth century Ashkenaz, the expanding *siddur* (or "order" of prayer) was considered too bulky to be practical, and was split into: (1) a *siddur* for daily and Sabbath use; (2) a *Haggadah* for the Passover *seder*; and (3) a *machzor* for holy day prayers, often including a separate volume for each of the three pilgrim festivals (*Pesach* = Passover; *Shavuot* = Pentecost; and *Sukkot* = Tabernacles) and for the High Holy Days (*Rosh Hashanah* = New Year, and *Yom Kippur* = Day of Atonement). This prayer book taxonomy is common today.

The most important later medieval developments occurred in the mystical tradition that was in part continued, in part revived, and in part newly enriched, both in twelfth century Germany and in thirteenth and fourteenth century Spain—the latter tradition reaching its liturgical zenith in the sixteenth century Ottoman empire, especially in Galilee. Under the influence of medieval piety, particularly that of the mendicant monastic orders of the time, the former movement, known as *Chasidei Ashkenaz* ("The pietists of northern Europe") favored a severely penitential, even ascetic, attitude to prayer; and their influence was substantial in northern and eastern Europe, for centuries. The Spanish school, the Kabbalah—really a philosophy rooted in Provencal neo-Platonism, and transferred south over the Pyrenees—spread throughout the Mediterranean, especially to the Land of Israel, with the expulsion of Jews from Spain in 1492.

In terms of creativity and daring, only the founding Pharisees and Tannaim even approach these sixteenth century kabbalists, who not only composed an entirely novel service to introduce the Sabbath (*Kabbalat Shabbat*, which precedes regular worship on Friday evening), but also redefined the very goal of worship, introducing ecstatic practices reminiscent of the trance-inducing customs of earlier times. These included rote recitation of divine names and the use of music for self-hypnotic purposes. Implicit in their worship was a bold theology whereby (1) God and the universe are declared coterminous; (2) the human existential state is thus equivalent to God's; (3) as the dominant metaphor for the fractured state of being on earth (and in God!) we find the sexual image of an androgynous deity, whose male and female elements are divorced from each other and in anxious search for reunification. Worship is nothing less than the most important means to restore God's male and female parts to wholeness. Thus the normative Rabbinic theology contained in the manifest content of the benedictions was suppressed in favor of a hidden mystical meaning assumed to underlie the prayers. Worshippers were instructed to pray with only the secret meaning in mind. To facilitate that end, introductory meditations called *kavvanot* (sing.: *kavvanah*) were composed, sometimes with a prayer's hidden purpose expressly stated, and sometimes with it only alluded to. In the seventeenth century—and especially in the eighteenth, under the influence of Polish/Russian Chasidism, a theological outgrowth of Kabbalah—Kabbalistic thought spawned new prayer books replete

with mystical *kavvanot*, as well as other more exotic innovations, such as diagrams pointing toward the divorced state of God, or to revived gnostic traditions regarding a dual world of light and darkness. These prayers reflected a new anthropology as well, featuring human beings as a reflection of a divided God and a divided world but yearning in prayer for the unity we call *shalom*—"peace" and "wholeness."

The Theology Implicit in the Jewish Mode of Worship

The message of worship comes from more than its words. The way of worship prescribed by the rabbis has theological and ecclesiological presuppositions.

The primary expression of traditional worship is corporate. The Jew may pray privately any time, any place, and with any words, gestures, or songs. But the Jew *must* pray with the community three time daily. The congregation must include a quorum (or *minyan*) of at least ten men, the minimum necessary to represent the People Israel. (Traditional Judaism does not recognize women here. On modern-day attitudes to women in worship, see below.) The text is almost invariably first-person plural, "We," indicative of the corporate covenant being celebrated. The prayer leader is included with the people, for the leader functions technically only as a *sheliach tzibbur*, an "agent of the congregation," presenting the public's praise and petition to God. An implicit social contract underlies the relationship, as if, concerned that they may not achieve the proper spiritual dimension, the people give up their right to pray as they wish, and entrust this "public agent" with the power to represent them on high. If the agent proves inept or unfit in character, a new one is selected.

Thus the most important single person in traditional Jewish worship became the *chazzan*, who grew from humble origins as a general caretaker and prayer leader of the ancient synagogue to be the modern cantor, entrusted with the proper recitation of the liturgy. Without a monastic tradition, Jews did not develop unison singing as Christianity did, but it did specialize in the solo song, as the prayer leader chanted blessing after blessing, from the beginning to the end of the service. Ideally, the *chazzan* was held accountable for the highest musical, vocal, and textual competence, no small matter, given the growth of worship traditions over the years. Textual enrichment had gone hand in hand with increased musical sophistication. The Torah, unmarked as to vowels and musical signs, had to be read without error, according to the proper cantillation mode; and even the prayer texts required specific knowledge of *nusach*—the name given to the musical systems—that varied with the season of the year and the service of the day.

It became customary for *chazzan* and congregation to sing the service antiphonally, a custom still to be found in Conservative and Reconstructionist congregations, but especially among the Orthodox. The congregation reads quickly through a prayer, each worshipper at a somewhat different speed, and often, out loud as well, a custom called *davvening*. The *chazzan*, who faces the same way as the congregation of which he is an integral part, listens for the noise to die down, indicating to him that everyone has finished the blessing in question. Then the *chazzan* repeats it, all or in part, but with the correct *nusach*, and, especially in recent Ashkenazic tradition, occasionally in extended melismatic form also, something akin to a jazz musician's improvisation around the melodies and harmonies of traditional tunes. This "dialogic" model, however, is ancient, going back to the very origin of Rabbinic worship, the implicit theological model being the angelic "dialogue" in Isaiah's vision, whereby two groups of angels face each other, alternately praising God. The *Sefardic* tradition, which moved from Spain and Portugal, mostly to Mediterranean countries where it was influenced by Muslim expressions of piety, largely retained the older congregational antiphony, by eschewing an elaborate cantorial solo tradition.

The dominant stance of the Jew before God is as giver of praise. Jews may be thankful—indeed, they must be—but they stand in covenantal partnership with God, such that the stance of receiving everything

as a gift of pure grace, for which one can respond with nothing but intense gratitude alone, is somewhat alien to Jewish tradition. True, the famous prayer *Avinu Malkenu*, associated originally (second century) with fasts occasioned by a drought but now a staple for the high holy day period, pleads, "Have mercy on us . . . for we have no works." But a theology of *mitzvah* (covenantal commandment) could hardly hold that extreme notion; commandments (*mitzvot*) were nothing if not works. So despite human sin, God owes Israel something under covenantal terms. And Israel turns to God in a characteristically affirmative stance, praising the One from whom blessings flow and acknowledging God as their origin and source.

Turning even to private prayer, we see Judaism's communal focus, as well as another aspect of the Jewish world view, its appreciation of the cosmos as something valuable in its own right, an object to be enjoyed. Private prayer, it will be recalled, was established primarily around the memorization of set "short-form" blessings appropriate to acts of enjoyment or as introductions to performing commandments. In the latter category, we find once again the dominant image of the Jew as a member of a covenanted people, intent on performing covenantal acts with intentional awareness that they are precisely that, *mitzvot*, divine commands that one is fortunate enough to do. In the former case, we cannot miss the positive stance toward the world, which persists despite even the heightened penitential consciousness of the Chasidei Ashkenaz, who may have insisted on the sinfulness of humanity but never imputed such negativity to God's cosmos. Thus men and women are to enjoy the world, its fruit and its rainbows, its sages and its scholars, all of which, among other things, are to be greeted with pertinent blessings. Not only the sense of sight, but hearing too and even smell, are positively codified in blessing forms that celebrate their functions, for there are blessings on hearing good news (or bad news), on smelling fragrant flowers or herbs, and so on. The theology of Jewish worship insists that it is a sin to evade the world which God has prepared us to experience.

Modern Developments, Europe

By the nineteenth century, post-Napoleonic Jewry in northern Europe found itself increasingly released from medieval ghettoes. Especially in large commercial and cultural capitals, enlightened Jewish communities faced the fact that their liturgy seemed still to be reflective of pre-modern consciousness. Beyond even the outmoded tenets of its troubling content, it was the manner of traditional prayer that Jews found disturbing. Services were long, entirely in Hebrew, lacking a sermon in the vernacular, and often conducted by cantors whose medieval style was deemed outmoded and not even in keeping with what tradition ideally demanded. The average service featured a noisy congregation of individualistic worshippers rocking back and forth and shouting prayers not at all in unison. This *davvening* hardly accorded with the dominant aesthetic of nineteenth century Europe, where worship was assumed to call for quietude, reverence, and decorum. Beginning in Alsace, but quickly spreading to Berlin, Hamburg, Vienna, and elsewhere, Jews initiated rapid and sometimes thorough worship reform.

Musically, the old modes and sounds were notated according to modern standards and recast so that "folk" music came out sounding like western classics. The *chazzan* was removed in favor of a singer and choir, who would render the tunes without the traditional cantorial embellishment. Rabbis learned to preach in German and to direct truncated worship services out of translated prayer books, stripped down to a basic liturgy; German translations or paraphrases omitted difficult-to-hold doctrines like the belief in bodily resurrection or an ultimate return from "exile" and emphasized the universalist strains of Jewish thought at the expense of particularistic ones. Of the two loci for Jewish worship, the home receded in importance, as Judaism shifted to the synagogue, which modern Jews saw as their "church."

European reform was not as far-reaching as it would become on American shores. Men generally still wore the traditional garb of prayer, a headcovering and a prayer shawl (*tallit*); and though women were granted

theoretical equality as early as 1845 and admitted therefore into the praying community, they still sat in a separate section reserved for them. But the Reform Movement had been born.

Three Rabbinic conferences in mid-century featured deliberations of this religious "reformation" of Judaism, including such matters as the use of Hebrew in prayer. One rabbi—later claimed as the progenitor of the Conservative Movement—walked out of the proceedings when his liberal colleagues refused sufficiently to privilege Hebrew as a sacred tongue. In 1819 and again in 1841, a Hamburg congregation published a liberal prayer book, with resulting charges and counter-charges, condemnations and excommunications between traditionalists and modernists. But nineteenth century European politics was increasingly reactionary, so that the fight for change moved to America.

United States

American Jewish liturgy has gone through three stages. The first is the period known as Classical Reform, which reached its zenith in 1894/95, with the publication of a *Union Prayer Book* for Reform congregations. Reforms begun in Europe were carried through here, generally in a sweeping fashion undreamed of across the ocean. Worship featured short services almost entirely in English; it was dominated by western music sung by a hidden choir, and a sermon similar to what one would hear in an Episcopalian or Congregationalist church. Folk traditions like specialized worship garb and old-world customs like carrying the Torah through the congregation were erased. The mood was one of awe, and the worshippers were almost completely passive, expected to rise and sit in unison, sometimes to read some responses together, rarely ever to sing, and, by and large, to recognize the presence of God as a transcendent being suggested by the staid architectural and cultural magnificence which enfolded them.

The second stage developed in 1881 to 1924 with the migration to the United States of eastern European Jews, for whom classical Reform seemed cold and devoid of Jewish substance or feeling. The new immigrants crystallized into the Conservative Movement, which orchestrated worship styles similar to those they had known in eastern Europe but modernized in North American format and codified liturgically in 1946. By then, eastern Europeans had joined Reform Temples too, bringing with them a yearning for traditional melodies and the warmth of the folk culture that classical Reform had jettisoned. The depression and World War II then delayed rapid evolution for two decades, and the shock of the Holocaust as well as the need to build and then to support the State of Israel readjusted Jewish concern away from local spirituality and toward world politics. But the movement of Jews to the suburbs brought a recognizably different form of Jewish worship, especially for Reform Jews, whose classical style had been dependent on huge sanctuaries and pipe organs that no one in suburbia could afford, or, for that matter, even wanted any more. Of the greatest moment was a certain child-centeredness of the 1950s and '60s, which occasioned children's services and children's prayer books (especially among Conservative Jews), and froze adult liturgies in old forms that fewer and fewer adults attended, until the cultural revolution in the late '60s and '70s.

By then, the third stage, unleashed in part by the ambiance of a Vietnam generation, flower children, and a search for new forms of spirituality, had begun. Unhappiness with suburban worship and the need to express theologically the loss of the six million in the Holocaust, and the miracle of a modern Jewish state led to the publication of new adult prayer books. In 1972, the Reform Movement began ordaining women as rabbis and investing them as cantors, reforms that eventually were replicated by Conservative and Reconstructionist Jews as well, the result being a sudden burst of gender consciousness. (Reconstructionism, American Judaism's fourth movement, had broken away from Conservative Judaism, following the philosophy of Mordecai Kaplan, who retained traditional liturgy, but devoid of certain traditional Jewish beliefs, including a personal deity and chosen peoplehood.)

The liturgical renewal since the 1960s parallels a similar trend in North America at large, and even worldwide, wherever western religions and their liturgies have spread. Akin to a Third Great Awakening in American history or even a Second Reformation in the west generally, and abetted by technological innovations in the art of inexpensive mass printing, a virtual plethora of new liturgies are now available. An outstanding example is the *Artscroll* series, an Orthodox set of volumes that has virtually replaced earlier traditional prayer books in North American circles, and in England, even threatened to unseat the venerable *Singer Prayer Book* that has dominated British worship since 1890. It combines theological ultra-conservatism with traditional scholarship, even restoring old liturgical lines once removed by Jewish censors who had either frowned upon certain extreme statements of Jewish faith or feared hostile Gentile reaction to them.

In all three North American liberal movements too, new liturgies have multiplied as never before. They feature (1) modern English translation or altogether new creations alongside Hebrew originals; (2) the recapturing of poetry from the gamut of Jewish tradition, especially by Hebrew poets who exemplify a new Jewish cultural consciousness occasioned by Israel's rebirth; (3) creative ritual for the new Jewish holy days of *Yom Hashoah* (Holocaust Day) and *Yom Ha'atsma'ut* (Israel Independence Day); and (4) affirmation of gender egalitarianism through gender-inclusive language. Musically, Reform congregations have restored the cantor (now man or woman) in place of distant choirs and classical singers, and everywhere, traditional melodies vie with a new "American sound" created by a growing cadre of synagogue composers. Above all, we find an accent again on spirituality, not only in the synagogue, but in the home too, which, even in Reform ranks, is reemerging as a locus for the Jew's stance before God.

The newest trend as of the 1990s is an abundance of special services like New Moon (*Rosh Chodesh*) liturgies used by women's groups to exemplify women's spirituality and consciousness, and "healing services," usually *ad hoc* rituals that do not follow the normal times and structure for prayer, but which attract small groups to sing and pray for wholeness, peace of mind, and healing of body and soul. Of long-term interest is an apparent trend toward the abandonment of official movement liturgies, a development facilitated by computer technology and by social mores that have weakened the esteem accorded to centralized authority in general. More and more North American congregations use independently created liturgies, often created on their own or borrowed from each other, but not authorized by their movements. The proclivity of Judaism toward a centralized official text of prayer since Rav Amram in the ninth century may be coming to an end.

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M

Magic, Magic Bowls, Astrology in Judaism

Judaism, like most systems of religion, distinguishes between miracles—the extraordinary deeds of the true God or agents of the true God—and magic—the extraordinary deeds of false gods or their agents.[1] The former acts are judged good and acceptable, so that a person who is able to use the power of the divine for purposes the religion deems right and appropriate is thought of as a holy man, miracle worker, or sage. By contrast, a person—usually an outsider or practitioner of a different religion—who demonstrates similar abilities is derided as a witch, demon, or fiend.

This distinction between magic and miracle is crucial to our comprehension of the Hebrew Bible's most complete list of prohibited magical practices (Deut. 18:10–11):[2]

> There shall not be found among you any one who burns his son or his daughter as an offering, any one who practices divination, a soothsayer, or an augur, or a sorcerer, or a charmer, or a medium, or a wizard, or a necromancer.

This list of prohibited forms of divination and magical practices is echoed throughout the Bible, e.g., at Lev. 19:26, 19:31, and 20:1–6. Yet despite the directness of its condemnation of these practices, Scripture itself frequently speaks in neutral or positive language about a wide range of similar divinatory and magical acts. Interpreting dreams, using magic staffs, reciting blessings and curses, referring to oracles—these are but a few of the "magical" procedures that elsewhere figure prominently as suitable behaviors of the progenitors and heroes of the Israelite nation.

In making sense of these contradictions, we must be clear that the distinction between permitted and prohibited, miracle and magic, has less to do with what deed is attempted—with or without success—than with the systemic context in which the deed is carried out. At the heart of Israelite thinking is the certainty that what *we* accomplish involves a miracle and is good, while what *you* do is magic and evil. This distinction is prominent and important, for instance, in the story of Moses's confrontation with the magicians of Pharaoh (Exod. 7:11, 7:22, etc.).[3] Moses and Aaron, on the one side, and the Egyptians, on the other, perform the same actions and thus seem to have similar knowledge and powers (with the exception that Moses and Aaron's "magic" appears to be more powerful than the Egyptians'; see Exod. 7:12, where the serpent formed of Aaron's staff eats the serpents formed from the Egyptian magicians' staffs). But while they act in manners similar to the Egyptians, Moses and Aaron are not referred to by the negative title "magician" at all. The determining factor is neither their capacity to perform wonders nor the specific nature of the trick they perform. Those who do what we would call magic are characterized, rather, on the basis of the source of their knowledge and power: God vs. sorcery. Thus a distinction is made between what *we* Israelites know and can do with the help of our God, and what *you* non-Israelites know and can do through other, venal forces. In light of this distinction, as we already have seen, the Israelites' actions are in the category of miracle; those of the outsider are (mere) magic.

Magic in Rabbinic Judaism

Taking up the fundamental distinction introduced already by the Hebrew Scriptures, in the first centuries C.E. Rabbinic Judaism presented what to modern readers appears at first sight to be contradictory views of "magic." On the one hand, the rabbis condemn magic as one of the "ways of the Amorites" (M. Shab. 6:10), and they sanction its practitioners to death by stoning (M. San. 7:7). One who so much as whispers over a wound the words of Exod. 15:26 ("I will put none of the diseases upon you that I have put on the Egyptians, for I am the Lord who heals you") is said to lose his place in the world to come (M. San. 10:1). Indeed, it is reported that, to quell magical practices, Simeon b. Shetah hung eighty witches on a single day (M. San. 6:4). And yet, on the other hand, these same sources frequently describe without condemnation or concern miraculous or magical acts performed by both rabbis and common people. As our examination of the biblical legacy leads us to anticipate, these superficially contradictory attitudes do not emerge from a distinction the rabbis perceive in the character of what is done or attempted, but, rather, from their analysis of the particular qualities and purposes of the individual who carries out the act. In the Rabbinic view, an unusual events is "magic"—and culpable—or "miracle"—and laudable—depending upon who does it, in what context, and for what purpose. Exactly what is accomplished is rarely at issue at all.

For the rabbis, miracles are distinguished from magic primarily by the fact that the former are performed by a sage whose power derives from the merit earned through knowledge of Torah and a life of piety. In their academies, sages participated in the processes of revelation that yielded Torah. In doing this, they became more than simply partners with God, who himself had revealed Torah. Rather, insofar as what rabbis said and thought was understood to embody the precise thought and words of God,[4] Rabbinic texts equate sages themselves with scrolls of the Torah. This is explicit at Y. M.Q. 3:7:[5]

A. He who sees a disciple of a sage who has died is as if he sees a scroll of the Torah that has been burned.
B. R. Jacob bar Abayye in the name of R. Aha: "An elder who forgot his learning because of some accident that happened to him—they treat him with the sanctity owed to an ark [of the Torah]."

The Torah, God's revelation, is incarnate in the sage, who as a result can use the power of God to perform wonders. Like Moses, whose wonders were achieved through special capacities granted him by God, so the sage can carry out astounding acts that are deemed legitimate and appropriate. Indeed, a particular sage's prestige would be substantially enhanced should it become clear that his knowledge of Torah in conjunction with other characteristic Rabbinic virtues had given him supernatural powers (Y. Ta. 3:11.IV):

C. There was a house that was about to collapse over there [in Babylonia], and Rab set one of his disciples in the house, until they had cleared out everything from the house. When the disciple left the house, the house collapsed.
D. And there are those who say that it was R. Adda bar Ahwah.
E. Sages sent and said to him, "What sort of good deeds are to your credit [that you have that much merit]?"
F. He said to them, "In my whole life no man ever got to the synagogue in the morning before I did. I never left anybody there when I went out. I never walked four cubits without speaking words of Torah. Nor did I ever mention teachings of Torah in an inappropriate setting. I never laid out a bed and slept for a regular period of time. I never took great strides among the associates. I never called my fellow by a nickname. I never rejoiced in the embarrassment of my fellow. I never cursed my fellow when I was lying by myself in bed. I never walked over in the marketplace to someone who owed me money.
G. "In my entire life I never lost my temper in my household."
H. This was meant to carry out that which is stated as follows: "I will give heed to the way that is blameless. Oh when wilt thou come to me? I will walk with integrity of heart within my house" (Ps. 101:2).

The correlation of learning and virtuous behavior with the ability to work wonders

is here explicit. The following passages, which appear at B. San. 67b-68a, ultimately make clear the way in which such laudable use of Rabbinical power is distinguished from the magical deeds performed by non-rabbis. The magic tricks of non-rabbis, but not those of a rabbi, render the lay magician culpable for death:

A. There was a woman who tried to take dirt from under the feet of R. Hanina [for use against him in sorcery].
B. He said to her, "If it works out for you, go do it, [for at Deut. 4:25] 'There is no one else besides him' is written."
C. Can this be so [that Hanina permitted the woman to attempt a magical act]?
D. [This seems impossible, since, at Deut. 4:25] "There is no one else besides him" is written.
E. And [suggesting that sorcerers attempt to avail themselves of some different power] did not R. Yohanan say, "Why are they called sorcerers? Because they deny the power of the family above"?
F. R. Hanina was in a special category, because he had a great deal of merit.

At issue in determining whether or not an act is forbidden as sorcery is the perceived source of the magical power. As D-E makes clear, what the sorcerer wishes to do is forbidden not because of the nature of the act but because it calls upon a power in heaven other than God. Hanina's different view is explained, F, as resulting from his own special character as a sage. He permits the woman's attempt against him because he holds her in fact to be powerless against God, who will protect him. The notion that sorcery, unlike the rabbis' own (permitted) acts, derives from outside powers, is developed in the continuation of the passage:

A. Said R. Aibu bar Nigri said R. Hiyya bar Abba, "'With their sorcery' (Exod. 7:22) refers to magic through the agency of demons, 'with their enchantments' (Exod. 7:11) refers to sorcery without outside help.
B. "This is as is said, 'And the flame of the sword that turns of itself' (Gen. 3:24) [that is, without outside aid]."
C. Said Abayye, "If [the sorcerer] uses exact methods, it is through a demon.
D. "If the sorcery does not work through exact methods, it is through enchantment."

Again, what distinguishes sorcery and enchantments from the rabbis' own permitted acts of wonders is that the former do not derive from the power of Torah. Sorcery, rather, uses demons or the magician's own personal powers. This notion, that magical deeds can be accomplished without the aid of an outside power at all, leads to a further distinction, described in the following, which also appears at B. San. 67b-68a:

A. Said Abayye, "The laws of sorcery are like the laws of the Sabbath.
B. "There are some actions that are punished by execution through stoning, some for which there is no penalty but which are forbidden, and some that are permitted to begin with.
C. "He who does a deed is punishable by stoning, but he who merely creates an illusion does what is forbidden but is exempt from punishment [M. San. 7:11D].
D. "And as to what is permitted to begin with, it accords with the matter involving R. Hanina and R. Oshaia.
E. "Every Friday afternoon they would study the laws of creation and make for themselves a third-grown calf, and they would eat it."

The performance of illusions is not culpable. These are parlor tricks and, while they should not be performed, are distinguished from real acts of magic, which are punished by execution through stoning.[6] But the more important distinction here is between all such acts of magic, C, and the wonders accomplished by rabbis, E. The miracle performed by Hanina and Oshaia is permitted because it uses the power of God, which the rabbis attain through study of the laws of creation. While it is magic, it is "our" magic, accomplished through knowledge of Torah, and so permitted.

The rabbis thus distinguish the use of the power of Torah from deeds that are sorcery or "black" magic. In making this distinction, they in no way deny the existence and power of magical acts. Their point, rather, is simply to distinguish the miracles that knowledge of Torah allowed rabbis to do, which they deemed proper and acceptable, from what sorcerers do, which they view always as wrong. An important aspect of this distinction was the rabbis' certainty that, based upon the power of God and Torah, their power—like that of Moses—was greater than the power of (mere) magicians (B. San. 67b):

A. Yannai came to an inn. He said to them, "Give me some water to drink." They brought him a flour-and-water drink.
B. He saw that the woman's lips were moving. He poured out a little of the drink, and it turned into scorpions. He said to them, "I drank something of yours, now you take a drink of mine."
C. He gave her something to drink, and she turned into an ass. He mounted her and went out to the market place.
D. Her girl-friend came and nullified the charm, so he was seen riding around on a woman in the market place.

When Yannai is given a drink that, when spilled out, turns into scorpions, he repays the innkeeper with a potion that turned her into an ass. While the innkeeper's girlfriend is able to break the spell, the clear point here is that the rabbi, by using his powers, retained the upper hand. Not only did he escape the danger presented by sorcerers, but he was able to use his own power again such magicians, at least temporarily turning one of them into an ass. Strikingly, although the passage highlights the greater power of the rabbi, it also makes the point that, overall, there is no intrinsic difference between his magic and that of the non-rabbi. What he can do is pretty much what they are able to do, including their ability to undo the spell he has cast. So as we have seen all along, the distinction between miracles and magic is purely one of perspective: what distinguishes the two is the ultimate source of the power that makes the deed possible.[7]

In similar passages, the Talmud reports that Ashi knew of a person who could produce ribbons of silk from his nostrils; Hiyya speaks of an Arab who chopped up a camel and, by ringing a bell, caused it to come together again; Eliezer states that he taught Aqiba how to cause an entire field of cucumbers to grow and then to be harvested simply by saying a few words. These reports of magic performed by rabbis, common Jews, and non-Jews suggest that despite biblical and Rabbinic prohibitions against sorcery, the use of magic within the general culture of the Talmudic period had a significant impact upon Jewish society. Such practices were largely accepted as real and, when performed by sages who used the power of Torah, were deemed appropriate methods of protecting people from harm or of accomplishing other legitimate purposes.

Magic Bowls

The Talmud portrays Jews in late antiquity as accepting and participating in the culture of magic/miracles of their age. The use of magical powers was seen as normal, and it was sanctioned so long as the person involved stood within the Rabbinic community and used magic for purposes accepted within Rabbinic religion. This implication of the literary sources is strengthened by archaeological evidence that reveals the extent to which the Jews of the Talmudic period, like the non-Jews of the cultures in which they lived, accepting and indeed depended upon the efficacy of magical spells for personal protection from demons and other ills.

This dependence is shown by a form of magical talisman found frequently in homes of the Talmudic period. The term "magic bowl" refers to a pottery bowl on which was written a magical formula used to drive away evil spirits or to invoke a deity's help in preserving and protecting individuals or a family. During the Talmudic period, in roughly 300–600 C.E., such bowls were in common use in Babylonia by Christians, Mazdeans, Mandeans, and Jews. While bowls in use in Jewish homes often were prepared by Jews who were not involved with or representative of the Rabbinical academies, certain Rabbinical figures also were deemed potent agents the citation of whose names could drive away particular demons. The names of these rabbis accordingly appear frequently on magic bowls and are invoked in spells written to protect an individual or property from demons. In this way, the Talmud's own image of the rabbi as a wonder-working holy man entered into and was utilized within the popular culture of the day.

The formulas used on magic bowls and the deities invoked are common across religious traditions. The bowls apparently were prepared by professionals, for instance, by Jews for both Jewish and non-Jewish use.

A particular practitioner would be hired to produce a bowl not because of his religious or cultural origins but because of his reputation for success. This means that only certain references found on the extant bowls, but not features of design or the overall formulas used, signify the religious context in which the bowl was prepared. Mention of the rabbi Joshua b. Perahia, for instance, suggests a Jewish origin, while reference to Jesus the Messiah clearly suggests a Christian context. For the most part, however, even references to specific holy-men or the use of particular incantations are uniform across the religions. Identification of the bowls as Jewish, Christian, or Mandean accordingly usually depends primarily upon the script in which the incantation was prepared: Aramaic letters are Jewish; Syriac script indicates a Christian source; and Mandean lettering suggests a Mandean origin.

The majority of extant magic bowls were found during excavations in Nippur in 1888–1889. They were found upside down in the ruins of houses, with one or more bowl found in almost every house as well as in cemeteries, where they apparently served to lay ghosts at rest. The bowls were used by individuals and families seeking protection for houses and property, e.g., cattle, often with a particular concern for domestic sexual life and unborn babies. Frequent targets of the bowls are Lilis and Liliths, which personify sexual abnormality, prey upon women and children, and were understood to produce offspring with human beings.

The chief element of the bowls is an incantation composed of repeating phrases, words, or syllables believed to have the power to bind favorable powers, on the one side, or demons, on the other, to some designated action. Angels, in Jewish bowls, and deities, on pagan ones, frequently are adduced, and there appears to have been an attempt to use as many names as possible, to harness, as it were, as many forces as were available against as many demons as might be active. The spell's main power, however, derived from terminology declaring that the demon has been rendered unable to exercise its control, for instance, that it is "bound, sealed, countersealed, exorcised, hobbled, and silenced." The separation of a Lilith from her victim often is expressed in terms of a writ of divorce.

The incantations generally begin with an invocation, followed by the name of the client or clients, the categories of demons to be purged, the names of the angels or deities in which the spells are pronounced, and a conclusion. Jewish texts frequently refer to the angels Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael. The name Yahweh also occurs, often broken down into individual, repeated, letters or syllables.

The evidence of these magic bowls suggests the extent to which Jews, like other people of late antiquity, took for granted the existence of special powers in the universe. Deriving from deities or demons, from gods or from *the* God, these powers could be controlled and used to the benefit of those with special knowledge and/or piety. The Rabbinic literature, of course, distinguished the actions of Jews—rabbis and lay people alike—from those of non-Jews. What the former did, performed in the name of God, was accepted as right and good. It stood in contradistinction to the same acts performed by non-Jews, whose "sorcery" was seen as vile and dangerous. In the magic bowls we see the way in which, in the common culture of the people, even these distinctions were blurred. The Jewish community shared in the broader attitude of its day, accepting the existence of demons and depending upon people's ability, through incantations and spells, to protect themselves and their property.

Sefer HaRazim

An early work of Jewish mysticism, the "Book of Mysteries" sheds further light on the extent to which the mystical and magical doctrines of the Hellenistic world were familiar to and accepted by the Jews of the Talmudic period. The work details prayers and sacrifices to be offered to pagan and Jewish deities in magical ceremonies and includes an invocation of Helios in Greek, transliterated into Hebrew script. Sefer HaRazim contains deliberations on the angels, discussions of the seven heavens, and about thirty sets of instructions for those seeking

to know the future, influence people in power, bring their enemies to ruin, be healed, speak with the moon and stars, and accomplish other similar desires. Authored by a Jew, the book is written in Mishnaic Hebrew and has a close philological relationship to the language of the magic bowls of its same period. Based upon content and style, the work probably belongs to the Talmudic period, although it possibly contains Greco-European magical texts from as late as the eighth century.

Sefer HaRazim originally was known from references scattered throughout the Sefer Raziel. It was reconstructed, apparently in its entirety, by Mordecai Margalioth on the basis of fragments from the Cairo genizah and Hebrew, Latin, and Arabic manuscripts. The relatively short book now contains about eight hundred lines divided into seven chapters. While composed in Hebrew, it is replete with transliterated Greek, representing the technical terms of Greek magic. The book includes the names of about seven hundred angels and, following its chapters on the lower six heavens, contains a chapter on the seventh heaven, dealing with God's throne and the throne of great light.

Astrology

The magic bowls, Sefer HaRazim, and the Talmudic theory of magic in general portray the existence in the universe of powers that can be exploited by those who know Torah. The idea that such powers can be employed in the service of humans is further developed in Talmudic discussions of astrology, which conceive the stars and planets to have a direct influence upon the direction of collective and individual human history.

This notion of a correspondence between what happens in the heavens and on earth is largely absent from the Hebrew Bible, which, in texts predating the Babylonian Exile, displays no astrological conceptions at all. First under Babylonian and then Hellenistic influence, such conceptions emerged only episodically in the biblical period. They appear in such texts as Is. 47:13, which reveals a negative attitude towards astrology: "You are wearied with your many counsels; let them stand forth and save you, those who divide the heavens, who gaze at the stars, who at the new moons predict what shall befall you." Dan. 2:27–30 similarly rejects the notion that astrologers can predict the future, even as it suggests that the future can be foretold insofar as the Israelite deity has made it explicitly known, for instance, in the king's dream:

> Daniel answered the king, "No wise men, enchanters, magicians, or astrologers can show to the king the mystery which the king has asked, but there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries, and he has made known to King Nebuchadnez'zar what will be in the latter days. Your dream and the visions of your head as you lay in bed are these: To you, O king, as you lay in bed came thoughts of what would be hereafter, and he who reveals mysteries made known to you what is to be. But as for me, not because of any wisdom that I have more than all the living has this mystery been revealed to me, but in order that the interpretation may be made known to the king, and that you may know the thoughts of your mind."

Daniel strikingly denies the abilities of magicians and astrologers even as he asserts that the knowledge they *claim* to be able to provide is in fact available through himself. Utilizing the distinction with which we already have become familiar, Daniel asserts that the knowledge he is able to impart has nothing to do with magic or enchantments: Daniel knows what he knows because it is the will of the God of Israel that it be known. Thus we deal not with magic but with miracle, not with astrology but with revelation.

Knowledge of and interest in the science of astrology accordingly entered Talmudic Judaism not through the Hebrew Bible—which rejects this science—but through Greco-Roman culture. This is clear from the fact that the common Talmudic term for an astrologer uses not the designations found at Is. 47:13 ("those who divide the heavens," "those who gaze at the stars") or in the book of Daniel ("predictors") but terms originating in the Greco-Roman world itself: *astralog* ("astrologer") in the land of Israel, and *Caldei* ("Chaldeans") in Babylonia. These individuals are practitioners of

a science referred to as *astralogia*, that is, the Greek term "astrology."

As in the case of the magic that the rabbis conceded non-Jews are in fact able to perform, so Rabbinic texts are clear that a direct correlation does exist between what occurs on earth and in heaven. Even so, the Talmudic rabbis overwhelmingly disapproved of the art of astrology. They held, on the one hand, that, under the direct protection of God, the Israelite nation is not subject to the stars. And they argued, on the other, that, even though astrologers can accurately predict the future, since they do not comprehend the manifold ways in which their predictions might be fulfilled, the knowledge is as likely to get their clients into trouble as it is to save them.

The basic notion of the correlation between heavenly and earthly events, along with the claim that Israel is not subject to that correlation, is made in the following passage at T. Suk. 2:5–6:

A. On account of four sorts of deeds are the lights [of the heaven] eclipsed:
B. because of counterfeiters, perjurers, people who raise small cattle, and people who cut down good trees.
C. And because of four sorts of deeds are Israelite householders handed over to the government:
D. because of holding on to writs of indebtedness that have already been paid, because of lending on interest, because of pledging funds to charity but not paying up, and because of having the power to protest and not protesting [wrong doing].

Actions on earth, A-B, have consequences in heaven. This is viewed, C-D, as parallel to the more common Israelite theodicy, which holds that Israelites' sinfulness is punished through the increased power of the gentile nations among whom the people of Israel dwell. The continuation of the passage, T. Suk. 2:6, makes a correlative point to A-B, explaining why astrology can work:

A. When the lights [of the heaven] are in eclipse, it is a bad omen for the whole world.
B. It is to be compared to a mortal king who built a palace and finished it and arranged a banquet, and then brought in the guests. He got mad at them and said to the servant, "Take away the light from them," so all of them turned out to be sitting in the dark.
C. R. Meir would say, "When the lights of heaven are in eclipse, it is a bad omen for Israel, for they are used to blows.
D. "It is to be compared to a teacher who came into the school house and said, 'Bring me the strap.' Now who gets worried? The one who is used to being strapped!"
E. When the sun is in eclipse, it is a bad omen for the nations of the world.
F. [When] the moon is in eclipse, it is a bad omen for Israel,
G. since the gentiles reckon their calendar by the sun, and Israel by the moon.
H. When it is in eclipse in the east, it is a bad omen for those who live in the east.
I. When it is in eclipse in the west, it is a bad omen for those who live in the west.
J. When it is in eclipse in-between, it is a bad omen for the whole world.
K. When it turns red, it is a sign that punishment by the sword is coming into the world.
L. When it is like sack-cloth, it is a sign that punishment by pestilence and famine are coming into the world.
M. If [the lights of the heaven] are in eclipse at their entry [into sunset], the punishment will tarry. [When they are in eclipse] when they rise, the punishment is coming fast.
N. And some say matters are reversed.
O. You have no nation in the whole world that is smitten,[8] the god of which is not smitten right along with it,
P. as it is said, "And against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments" (Exod. 12:12).
Q. When Israel is occupied with Torah, they do not have to worry about all these omens,
R. as it is said, "Thus says the Lord, 'Do not learn the way of the gentiles, nor be dismayed at the signs of the heavens, for the nations are dismayed at them'" (Jer. 10:2).

The long introduction at A-P sets up the main point, which is at Q-R. The science of astrology is in fact effective in predicting the future, except as regards the people of Israel when they are true to their covenant obligations. Then they can be certain that they are under the direct protection of God, so that they need have no concern for heavenly signs.

While denying that what is forecast in the stars applies to the people of Israel when

the nation follows the covenant by occupying itself with Torah, the rabbis still are clear that they accept the basic premise of astrology. For they maintain that one's character and destiny are determined by the time of one's birth, either by the day of the week on which one is born or by the star that is ascendant at the exact time of the birth. The former view, which says that the day counts, is based on the notion of the power of God's acts of creation; the character of each day, in this view, is determined by the things that, in the beginning, God created on that day. But the other view accepts without hesitance the perspective of Greco-Roman culture, that the heavenly luminaries are gods that govern the earth. This point is explicit at B. Shab. 156a-b:

A. It was written in R. Joshua b. Levi's notebook, "One who is born on Sunday will be a man without 'one thing' in him."
B. What is the meaning of a man without "one thing" in him?
C. Should I say, without one good quality? But did not R. Ashi say, "I was born on Sunday"? So it must be, "A man without one thing to his disgrace."
D. But did not R. Ashi say, "I and Dimi bar Qaquzeta were born on Sunday: I am a king, and he is a *capo di capi*"?
E. Rather, it means, either wholly good or wholly bad. How come? Because light and darkness were created on that day.
F. [Reverting to the notebook:] "One who is born on Monday will be contentious. How come? Because the waters were divided that day. One who was born on a Tuesday will be wealthy and promiscuous. How come? Because herbs were created that day [and they multiply rapidly and commingle with other herbs]. One who was born on Wednesday will be wise and have a great memory. How come? Because that is the day on which the heavenly luminaries were hung up. One who was born on Thursday will do deeds of generosity. How come? Because fish and birds were created that day [and they are fed through God's generosity]. One who was born on Friday will be someone who makes the rounds [in his search for learning]."
G. Said R. Nahman bar Isaac, "One who makes the rounds to do religious deeds."
H. [Reverting to the notes:] "One who is born on the Sabbath will die on the Sabbath, because the preeminent Sabbath day was desecrated on his account."
I. Said Raba bar R. Shila, "And he will be called a great saint."

The continuation of this passage endorses the general principle of the validity of astrology but rejects the specific way in which Joshua b. Levi applies that principle. Hanina argues that the day on which a person is born is not specific enough to allow determination of his character. We must, rather, examine the state of the heavens at the exact time of birth.

J. R. Hanina said to [his disciples], "Go and tell Bar Levi [that is, R. Joshua], 'It is not the star that rules over the day in general on which one was born that governs, but the star that controlled that very hour that governs. He who was born under the sun will be an outstanding person; he will eat and drink of his own property, and his secrets will be uncovered; if he is a thief, he will not succeed. He who is born under Venus will be wealthy and promiscuous. How come? Because fire was created under that star. He who was born under Mercury will have a wonderful memory and be smart. How come? Because Mercury is the scribe of the sun. He who is born under the moon will be a man to suffer evil, building and destroying, destroying and building, eating and drinking what is not his, and his secrets will remain hidden. If he is a thief, he will be successful. He who is born under Saturn will be a man who never accomplishes what he sets out to do.'"
K. Others say, "All plans against him will be frustrated."
L. "He who is born under Jupiter [called 'righteous'] will be a person who habitually does righteousness."
M. R. Nahman bar Isaac said, "Doing righteousness in good deeds."
N. "He who is born under Mars will shed blood."
O. R. Ashi said, "That means he'll be a surgeon, thief, slaughterer, or circumciser."
P. Rabbah said, "I was born under Mars."
Q. Said Abbayye, "Yes, and you inflict punishment and kill [with words]."

As we already saw above, the Talmudic rabbis' acceptance of the accuracy of astrology belies their own sense that the knowledge it presents may not correctly predict what will happen to Israelites at all. For

the people of Israel are directly subject to God, who, since he created the heavens, can change them around at will, rendering previous predictions worthless. This point is made in the continuation of the passage we have been reviewing at B. Shab. 156a-b:

A. It has been stated:
B. R. Hanina says, "One's star is what makes one smart, one's star is what gives wealth, and Israel is subject to the stars."
C. R. Yohanan said, "Israel is not subject to the stars."
D. And R. Yohanan is consistent with views expressed elsewhere, for said R. Yohanan, "How on the basis of Scripture do we know that Israel is not subject to the stars? As it is said, 'Thus says the Lord, Do not learn the way of the gentiles, nor be dismayed at the signs of the heavens, for the nations are dismayed at them' (Jer. 10:2). They are dismayed, but the Israelites are not dismayed."
E. And also Rab takes the view that Israel is not subject to the stars, for said R. Judah said Rab, "How on the basis of Scripture do we know that Israel is not subject to the stars? As it is said, 'And he brought him forth outside" (Gen. 15:5). Said Abraham before the Holy One, blessed be he, 'Lord of the world, "Someone born in my household is my heir" (Gen. 15:3).' He said to him, 'Not at all. "But he who will come forth out of your own loins" (Gen. 1:4).' He said before him, 'Lord of the world, I have closely examined my star, and I have seen that I am destined to have no children.' He said to him, 'Abandon this astrology of yours—Israel is not subject to astrology. Now what's your calculation? [156b] Is it that Jupiter stands in the west [and that is your constellation]? I'll turn it back and set it up in the East.' And so it is written, 'Who has raised up Jupiter from the east? He has summoned it for his sake' (Is. 41:2)."

When applied to Israelites, astrology is inaccurate, since God can change the order of the heavens. The authorities in the following add that such changes are not in the hands of God alone. Rather, the people of Israel's own actions—their adherence to Torah through the performance of acts of righteousness—have an equal power to change the future from that which astrology predicts:

A. It is also the position of Samuel that Israel is not subject to the stars.
B. For Samuel and Ablat [a gentile sage] were in session, and some people were going along to a lake. Said Ablat to Samuel, "That man is going but won't come back; a snake will bite him and he'll die."
C. Said to him Samuel, "Indeed? Well, if he's an Israelite, he will go and come back."
D. While they were in session, he went and came back. Ablat got up and took off the man's knapsack and found in it a snake cut up and lying in two pieces.
E. Said Samuel to the man, "What did you do [today in particular]?"
F. He said to him, "Every day we tossed our bread into one pot and ate, but today one of us had no bread, and he was ashamed. I said to him, 'I will go and collect the bread.' When I came to him, I made as if I collected the bread, so he shouldn't be ashamed."
G. [Samuel] said to him, "You have carried out a religious duty."
H. Samuel went forth and expounded, "'But charity delivers from death' (Prov. 10:2)—not from a grotesque death, but from death itself."

The point is not that the gentile's prediction was objectively wrong, but that the specific actions of the Israelite had protected him from his expected fate.[9] Samuel, for his part, was able to anticipate this because of his own knowledge of Torah and its power. The relationship between Jewish sage and gentile seer thus is shown to be similar to the relationship between sage and magician. The rabbis take for granted the power of the magician and astrologer. At the same time, they comprehend these non-Jewish sciences to have very limited affect upon the Jewish community. Study of Torah and adherence to the covenant provide rabbis and Israelite lay-people with powers that far exceed those of gentile magic.

In line with this thinking, other Rabbinic texts adjure Israelites to stay away from astrology and to realize that their power lies in adherence to Torah. This point is explicit at Gen. Rab. XLIV:XII:

1.A. "And [God] brought him [that is, Abraham] outside [and said, 'Look toward heaven and number the stars, if you are able to number them']" (Gen. 15:5):
B. R. Joshua in the name of R. Levi, "Now did he bring him outside of the world, that the text should say, 'And

he brought him outside'? But the sense is that he showed him the open spaces of heaven, in line with this verse: 'While as yet he had not made the earth nor the open spaces' (Prov. 8:26)."
C. R. Judah b. R. Simon in the name of R. Yohanan: "He brought him above the vault of heaven. That is in line with the statement, 'Look toward heaven and number the stars,' and the meaning of the word 'look' is only 'from above to below.'"
D. Rabbis say, "[God told him], 'You are a prophet, not an astrologer, as it is said, "Now, therefore, restore the man's wife, for he is a prophet" (Gen. 20:7).'"

The anti-astrological polemic, invited by the reference of Gen. 15:5 to looking at the stars, is clear. God's purpose in having Abraham look at the stars was not to validate the claims of astrology, so far as these claims might be held to pertain to Israel. This is because, as is made explicit in the continuation of the passage, God, not the stars, governs the fate of the people of Israel:

2.A. In the time of Jeremiah the Israelites wanted to take up this principle [of astrology], but the Holy One, blessed be he, did not allow them to do so, in line with this verse: "Thus says the Lord, 'Do not learn the way of the nations, and do not be dismayed at the signs of heaven'" (Jer. 10:2).
B. Abraham, your forefather, wanted to take up this principle, but [God] did not allow him to do so.
3.A. Said R. Levi, "While the sandal is on your foot, step on the thorn. Someone who is placed below them should fear them, but you are placed above them, so should trample them down."

Israelites are above the nations of the world so that their fate is not ultimately determined by the heavenly bodies. It is, rather, controlled by God, in response to the Israelites' adherence to the covenant. This point, regarding the way in which the Israelites' can control their own fate, is elaborated in the following:

4.A. R. Yudan in the name of R. Eleazar: "Three things annul an evil decree [that is foreseen by astrology], and these are they: prayer, acts of charity, and repentance. And all three of them may be located in a single verse of Scripture:
B. "'If my people, upon whom my name is called, shall humble themselves and pray [and seek my face, and turn from their evil ways, then I will forgive their sin]' (2 Chr. 7:14).
C. "'If my people, upon whom my name is called, shall humble themselves and pray' refers to prayer.
D. "'. . . and seek my face' refers to acts of charity, in line with this verse: 'I shall behold your face in acts of charity' (Ps. 17:15).
E. "'. . . and turn from their evil ways' refers to repentance.
F. "Then: 'I will forgive their sin.'"
G. R. Huna in the name of R. Joseph: "Also changing one's name and the doing of a good deed will have the same effect. We know that changing a name makes a difference from the case of Abraham and Sarah [see Gen. 17].
H. "We know that doing a good deed makes a difference from the case of the men of Nineveh, as it is said, 'And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil ways' (Jonah 3:10)."
I. Some say, "Also changing one's place of domicile, as it is said, 'And the Lord said to Abram, "Get you out of your country"' (Gen. 12:1)."
J. R. Mana said, "Also fasting [has the same effect], as it is said, 'The Lord answer you in the day of distress [interpreted here to mean the day of fasting]' (Ps. 20:20)."
K. Raba bar Mehasia and R. Hama bar Guria in the name of Rab: "Fasting is as good for a dream as fire for stubble."
L. Said R. Joseph, "That is so if it is done on the same day [as the dream], even if that is the Sabbath [on which it is ordinarily forbidden to fast]."

The fate of the people of Israel is determined not by the stars but directly by God, who responds to the Israelites' actions on earth. This means that the correspondence between heaven and earth is, for the Israelite people, the opposite of what the astrologers claim. Astrology claims that what happens in the heavens determines, or at least announces, the outcome of events on earth. Within the theology of Judaism, by contrast, people's actions on earth determine the response of God in heaven. This means that, within the Talmudic sources, God appropriately may be described as an astrologer (Gen. Rab. 1.IV):

2.A. R. Huna, R. Jeremiah in the name of R. Samuel b. R. Isaac: "Intention concerning the creation of Israel came before all else.
B. "The matter may be compared to the case of a king who married a noble lady but had no son with her. One time the king turned up in the market place, saying, 'Buy this ink, inkwell, and pen on account of my son.'
C. "People said, 'He has no son. Why does he need ink, inkwell, and pen?'
D. "But then people went and said, 'The king is an astrologer, so he sees into the future and he therefore is expecting to produce a son!'
E. "Along these same lines, if the Holy One, blessed be he, had not foreseen that, after twenty-six generations, the Israelites would be destined to accept the Torah, he would never have written in it, 'Command the children of Israel.'"

A similar point is made at Lev. Rab. 36.IV:

2.A. R. Berekhiah and R. Levi in the name of Samuel bar Nahman: "Abraham was saved from the furnace of fire only because of the merit of Jacob.
B. "The matter may be compared. To what is it like? It is like the case of someone who was judged before the ruler, and the judgment came forth from the ruler that he was to be put to death through burning.
C. "The ruler perceived through his astrological science that [the condemned man] was going to beget a daughter, who was going to be married to a king. He said, 'This one is worthy to be saved through the merit of the daughter that he is going to beget, who is going to be married to a king.'
D. "So in the case of Abraham, judgment against him came forth from Nimrod that he was to be put to death through burning. But the Holy One, blessed be he, foresaw that Jacob was going to come forth from him. So he said, 'That one is worthy of being saved on account of the merit of Jacob.'
E. "That is in line with the following verse of Scripture: 'Thus said the Lord to the House of Jacob, who redeemed Abraham' (Is. 29:22)."

God foresees what will happen on earth and acts accordingly. This means that the people are protected from the fate that the heavenly bodies dictate for the other nations. Astrology, according to the rabbis, had its place and purpose, and there were even individual sages who engaged in it (see, e.g., Deut. Rab. 8.VI). But like gentile magic in general, the rabbis saw neither a reason for Jews to participate in astrology nor any real threat from predictions made on the basis of astrology. The fate of the people of Israel, rather, was determined directly by God, who responded to the Israelites' engagement with Torah.

Astrology in the Ancient Synagogue

The rabbis' ambivalence towards astrology—their knowledge of and participation in it even as they denied its relevance—belies the place of astrological figures as a central motif of the synagogue of the Talmudic period. The prevalence of the zodiac in synagogue art is described by Bernard Goldman in his discussion of the fifth or sixth century C.E. mosaic zodiac preserved in the Beth Alpha synagogue:[10]

> The badly preserved mosaic floor of the synagogue at Yafia contains an animal circle, similar to that of Beth Alpha, but it is not clear whether it represents the zodiac or the Twelve Tribes. The synagogue of 'Ain Doug (Na'arah) contains an elaborately decorated mosaic floor with the wheel of the zodiac holding the center of the tripartite panel, much as at Beth Alpha; but, at 'Ain Doug an interlocking pattern containing animal and floral vignettes replaces the Akedah. In 1930, another historiated synagogue mosaic containing the zodiac was uncovered on Mt. Carmel at the village of 'Isfiya ('Esfia). Also, some of the relief decoration from the synagogue at Beth She'arim may have composed a zodiac design. The most recently discovered zodiac floor mosaic is one near Tiberias that also repeats the Beth Alpha format but, in style, is far closer to its Classical art sources. . . . There are several other probable references to the zodiac in synagogue architectural decorations; for example it is found on a fragmentary carved screen from er-Rafid. There is no question but that future excavations will bring to light additional examples.

The recurrence of the zodiac in synagogue after synagogue suggests its importance as more than a decorative or ornamental device. Rather, as the Talmudic sources make

clear and as the continued appearance of the zodiac in later European Jewish art shows, the use of the zodiac in the synagogue of the Rabbinic period was consonant with its symbolic importance, an importance that extended from non-Jewish into Jewish metaphysics.

In classical sources, the zodiac symbolized the heavens. Through the image of the zodiac, "The artist transformed the starry path into a canopy, dome, arch, and frame to express the cosmic dimensions of the icon and ritual it enclosed" (Goldman, p. 61). Expressing this meaning, the zodiac had a natural place as a focal point of Jewish worship and ritual, as a "symbol of the heavens and constellations under whose aegis the destinies of nations and of men were ordered" (p. 64). Prayers for divine protection, for God's mercy and forgiveness from sin, for the coming of salvation appropriately were recited in a setting that depicted the divine and heavenly forces that could answer those prayers. Astrological symbols thus functioned in ancient synagogue not as mere ornamentation but as vivid representations of the Hellenized Jews' perception of the cosmic order.

At the center of the representation of the zodiac at Beth Alpha, as in the fourth century floor at Hamat Tiberias, and elsewhere, stood the sun-god Helios and his chariot. Despite the firm biblical, post-biblical, and Rabbinic literary traditions against the creation of images of what is on earth, let alone of foreign deities or of the invisible God of the Israelites, it seems almost certain that those who worshipped in these synagogues knew exactly what this portrayal of Helios symbolized. As E.R. Goodenough states, in their eyes this was "the divine charioteer of Hellenized Judaism, God himself,"[11] the God at whom all prayer and supplication was aimed. The medium of astrology and the symbols of the zodiac thus portrayed for the common Jew of the Talmudic period the cosmic order and the deity who had created that order and, with it, the entire world. This was the true God who responded to human prayer, controlling and shaping in the manner that astrology describes all that happens on earth.

Astrology in Medieval Judaism

In the middle ages, especially in the orbit of Islam, Jews increasingly practiced astrology. A thorough knowledge of this art is evidenced in the Zohar and Sefer Raziel, and astrology is referred to frequently in medieval liturgical poetry, including the works of poets such as Kalir and Ibn Gabirol.[12] Well known Jewish astrologers of the ninth century were Jacob ibn Turik, whom Ibn Ezra says brought the astrological tables of the Hindus to Baghdad. Of the same period, some astrological works remain extant of Sahl b. Bishr al-Israeli, also known as Rabban al-Tabari ("the rabbi of Tabaristan").

In this period, the works of Islamic astrologers were translated by Jews into Hebrew. Ibn Ezra himself was an avid follower of astrology, which he referred to as a sublime science. He even translated into Hebrew the astrological work of Mashallah, the court astrologer of Almansur and Mamun, and he authored important works on the constellations and planets. Referring to astrology in his biblical commentaries, Ibn Ezra understood the heavens to represent the "book of life" in which people's fate is written. Still, in accordance with the inherited Talmudic perspective, he believed that this fate could be overruled by God, to whom humans accordingly have recourse in their quest to reshape their own destiny.

A similar approach appears in the commentary to Maimonides' Mishneh Torah of Abraham b. David of Posquieries (*Rabad*). While asserting the influence of the stars upon human destiny, he also avers that faith in God can overcome this influence. Maimonides, by contrast, alone among the major Rabbinic authorities of this period, opposed astrology and declared it explicitly forbidden by Lev. 19:26 ("You shall not practice augury or witchcraft"). Maimonides viewed astrology as a dangerous superstition, bordering on idolatry, that was "a disease on a science."

The last important Jewish astrologer was David Gans (in Germany, 1541–1613) Alongside his work on Jewish and general history (*Zemah David*), he wrote a work on

cosmography (*Gebulat ha-Erez*), an astronomical treatise (*Magen David*), and a number of mathematical works. His *Nehmad ve-Naim*, which deals with astronomy and mathematical geography, contains a historical survey of the development of these subjects around the world.

The modern world and the emergence of science has largely brought an end to astronomy and the other magical practices known in Talmudic times.[13] One minor throw-back to that period is the contemporary use of the Hebrew phrase "Mazal Tov," literally "A good constellation," to mean "Good luck!" Similarly, following the approach of the Shulhan Aruch (*Yoreh Deah* 179,2), some Jews continue to reject certain days of the week or month for weddings or other ventures.

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NOTES

[1] Jacob Neusner, "Science and Magic, Miracle and Magic in Formative Judaism: The System and the Difference," in Jacob Neusner, ed., *Religion, Science, and Magic in Concert and in Conflict* (New York, 1989), p. 61.

[2] On the following see Joanne Kuemmerlin-McClean, "Magic: Old Testament," in *ABD*, vol. 4, pp. 468–470.

[3] See too Elijah's confrontation with the prophets of Baal at 1 Kings 18:17–39.

[4] I paraphrase Jacob Neusner, "God: How, in Judaism, Do We Know God," in Jacob Neusner, ed., *Formative Judaism* (Seventh Series, Atlanta, 1993), p. 209.

[5] On this point, see Neusner, "Science and Magic," p. 69.

[6] The continuation of the passage explains how one can distinguish an illusion from an actual act of magic: Said Rav to R. Hiyya, "I myself saw a Tai-Arab take a sword and chop up a camel, then he rang a bell and the camel arose." [Hiyya] said to him, "After this was there blood or dung? [If not], it was merely an illusion."

[7] On these passages, see Neusner, "Science and Magic," pp. 71–75.

[8] In Hebrew, this is the same word elsewhere translated as "in eclipse."

[9] The same point is made in the subsequent paragraphs of B. Shab. 156b.

[10] *The Sacred Portal. A Primary Symbol in Ancient Judaic Art* (Detroit, 1966), p. 60.

[11] E.R. Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period* (Princeton, 1953–1968), vol. VIII.2, pp. 214ff., cited in Goldman, p. 64.

[12] On the following, see Kaufmann Kohler, "Astrology, in Medieval Times," in Isadore Singer, ed., *Jewish Encyclopedia*, vol. 2, pp. 243–245.

[13] But, on the medieval Christian perception of the Jew as "full of sorcery," see Joshua Trachtenberg, *The Devil and the Jews. The Medieval Conception of the Jew and Its Relation to Modern Anti-Semitism* (Philadelphia and Jerusalem, 1983), pp. 57–75.

Mamzer

ILLEGITIMATE children have been a source of concern to many societies. Each of these societies stigmatizes in some way its "illegitimate offspring." In general, illegitimacy refers to a child whose conception and birth do not conform to the institutional rules governing reproduction in the community to which its parents belong.[1] Even today, the concept is related to the structures of the institution of marriage—an institution that among other purposes, embodies the social and religious "lawfulness" of the group. These controls, in many societies affect economic (inheritance and food distribution), lineage, naming, marriage portion and dowries.[2] Since many societies value the stability of the family structure, any deviant activity to the unit is rendered taboo.

We deal with Jewish societies here. Deut. 23:3 states: "No *mamzer* shall be admitted into the congregation (assembly or community) of the Lord; even to the tenth generation (i.e., for all time) none of the descendants shall come into the *congregation of the Lord*." Since the Bible does not define the term *mamzer*, we must assume the ancient Israelite community understood its full ramifications. We are not informed of the *mamzer's* place and obligations in the Israelite nation. Does he receive an inheritance from his father? Is he obligated in laws and rituals? Not only is there no explanation of *mamzer*, the verses do not inform us of the parameters of "the congregation of the Lord." The significance of the sanctions against the sinner is not stated.

In common discussion, the verse is understood according to the opinions of the rabbis. M. Yeb. 4:13 offers three definitions:

1. Aqiba's firm tradition: "A *mamzer* is the offspring of any forbidden union of *close relatives* included under the rubric, 'He shall not come into the congregation of the Lord.'" Most sources suggest that for Aqiba, any forbidden union at all results in the child becoming a *mamzer*. The notion of "close relatives" in his statement should be broadly defined. Some take Deut. 23:1 to mean that if a man rapes a woman and his son produces a child through her, then this child cannot come into the "congregation of the Lord. The son's union with her is simply forbidden but not punishable by God or deserving of death. The Mishnah's Aqiba includes in the *mamzer* rubric what other rabbis said as well and has the broadest definition. M. Yeb. 4:12 tells us Aqiba would brand the product of a union of a priest and his divorced wife as a *mamzer*. This view provides a very loose definition of "close relative" and was preferred by the Yerushalmi and Bavli.

   On the other hand, in T. Yeb. 6:9, we are informed that Aqiba opines that a *mamzer* derives only from near of kin. We are given examples of a very narrow definition of "close relative." Some commentators prefer this view. Accordingly, Aqiba's view in the Toseftan position is the narrowest of all. He stigmatizes only the most limited group of blood relatives, subject to rules of sexual impropriety. Hence, in this view, he would be the most restrictive of all the rabbis in applying the term *mamzer*.
2. Simeon the Temani's tradition: "The offspring of any union for which the participants are liable to a punishment called *karet* (some kind of extirpation brought about by divine agency and not human courts)." It is also noted here, in a curious editorial remark, that the law follows his opinion. Simeon's view certainly includes those categories of unions stigmatized by Joshua and includes those stigmatized by Toseftan editor's view of Aqiba. It does not however include most of those called *mamzer* by the wide ranging view of Mishnaic editor's Aqiba.
3. Joshua's tradition: "The offspring of any union for which the participants are liable to be put to death by a court." The ordering implies that Aqiba is the most severe and would likely include the categories of everyone else. Joshua is the most exclusive in applying the rules of *mamzer* and rejects the categories adduced by the others.

Simeon ben Azzai claims that actual genealogical records mention a case of a *mamzer* resulting from an adulterous relationship. This claim certainly upholds the view of Joshua, the Mishnah's Aqiba (but not the Toseftan editor's interpretation of Aqiba), and Simeon. Why then was this statement added to the Mishnah with the observation that it substantiates the case of Joshua? Is it possible that the Tosefta preserves the true view of Aqiba's words, taking them most literally, and that ben Azzai (whose views are given in the Mishnah!) claimed the genealogy records support Joshua's view *vis-à-vis* Aqiba's very limited application as provided in the Tosefta. If so, the Tosefta's views on these matters are prior to the Mishnah's and that is entirely possible. Some modern scholars have suggested ben Azzai's statement was added here for some polemical reasons (and not legal since it adds nothing new), perhaps an allusion to the status of Jesus of Nazareth. In any case, the view of Aqiba, however it be construed, has no legal authority.

Of relevance is the blanket definition offered in M. Qid. 3:12. It conforms to the view of Simeon (but excludes the child of a menstruant) and Joshua:

> And in any situation in which a woman has had union with a man to whom she cannot be legally betrothed but could be legally betrothed to others, only then the offspring from the former is a *mamzer*. And what category of unions are these [where betrothal can never be effected]? This is any category of *ervah* (prohibition against uncovering the nakedness of specific types of Jewish woman such as a sister or a married woman) union that has been prohibited by the Torah.

The ruling is codified in *Shulhan Arukh even ha'ezer* 4:13 and limits, to some extent, the application of the term *mamzer*. This is made manifest by Tarfon stating afterwards that *mamzerim* can purify their offspring from their taint by entering certain relationships. (M. Qid. 3:13). A *mamzer* who married a female gentile slave who undertook some Jewish practices in her entrance into servitude would be able to have children who were free to marry into the Jewish fold. Once the slave was freed she was a valid Israelite, the marriage was valid as it had been done under permissible venues. The children born after she was freed, becoming a full Jew, would have no stigmas. Likewise, if a *mamzer* married a non-Jew, his offspring would be gentiles (not *mamzerim*), and if they converted, they could marry whomever they pleased. According to current Orthodox Jewish practice from the time of the Talmudic rabbis to the present, a *mamzer* is defined as the product of the taboo unions listed in Lev. 18:1–25: parents, children, siblings, grandchildren, step-parents, step-siblings, aunts, uncles, in-laws, married women. Such people cannot marry those who were born Jews, although they marry converts, freed slaves, and *Netinim*. A married woman lacking Rabbinic, sanctioned divorce proceedings according to halakhah who bears a child from a man who is not her halakhic husband (although she might have married him through false claims or some other form of marriage) mothers a *mamzer*. This child has limited options for marriage, most likely another *mamzer* or a convert.

While a gloss to the Mishnah has fixed the view of Simeon the Temani as normative, the Tosefta provides background information to assess the decision of the fixed rules. The T. Qid. 4:16 cites as a general ruling: "A gentile, or slave who had sexual relations with an Israelite girl and she produced a son, the offspring is a *mamzer*." This stance is not listed in the Mishnah as a definition. However, in regards to how *mamzerim* descended from priestly families are to act in regards to eating priestly gifts we discover that M. Yeb. 7:5 assumes the Tosefta's definition of *mamzer*. The assumption rejects the minority view of T. Qid. 4:16, which is also the majority view of M. Yeb. 4:13: "[R. Simeon b. Judah says in the name of R. Simeon (better manuscripts)], a *mamzer* derives only from a woman who is prohibited by reason of the Scriptural statements on prohibited sexual unions on account of which they are liable to extirpation at the hands of heaven (*karet*)." The upshot is that in the Mishnaic period the definitions of *mamzer* swung widely between views that *mamzer* resulted from gross incest on the one hand and from social infringements of inferior status (slave, non-Jew) on the other.

These two views of *mamzer* (child of a Jewess and a slave; child of a relationship punishable by *karet*) are placed side by side in Tosefta Qiddushin and represent the major views of the Tannaitic period. At some point, both views became incorporated as normative. How can we assess the fact that sometimes the laws swung in accordance with the one and at other times in accordance with the other? It would seem most logical to assume that priests followed the most stringent views of genetic purity while others followed more lenient views.

Both views were operative. Thus, in regards to priestly matters Mishnah records the priestly stringent practices, while in regards to non-priestly concerns it records as a matter of course the more lenient views. The rabbis, acknowledging time-worn practice even if not strictly adhering to their own notions of Scriptural law, would not allow a woman who was merely suspected of sexual contact with slaves or non-Jews to marry a priest. The social stigmas and priestly customs were respected. Thus, the two conflicting views recorded in the Tosefta found their practical applications in the later codification of the Mishnah. As seen in many passages in the Mishnah and Tosefta, the issue of the purity of the priests and their choice of spouse, the preservation of pure priestly blood lines and the need to ostracize the *mamzer* were strongly interconnected. M. Ket. 2:9 in fact specifically brings the full rigor of the law to bear on priestly marriage.[3] The rabbis of the Talmud (B. Yeb. 62b) and its later literature, particularly Meiri, discussed these issues at length offering various solutions to the dichotomy

of priestly laws of *mamzer* and general rulings. Whether or not Tosefta was redacted earlier or later than Mishnah cannot be determined on these observations alone.

Apart from the discussions of rabbis, modern theories abound concerning the stigma and restriction of the *mamzer*. Presumably, they are members of the Jewish people and the exclusion is transmitted to future generations. In Zech. 9:6 the word *mamzer* appears in a cryptic context: "A *mamzer* shall dwell in Ashdod and I will make an end to the pride of Philistia." The reference appears to be to a member of a foreign nation. Here the *mamzer* is placed in a group with negative status. Many commentators argue the reference suggests that although Philistines will dwell at home, their own territory will have the status of a conquered land holding mongrel nationalities. Epstein[4] suggests that both the book of Deuteronomy and Zechariah are referring to a foreign nation, most probably "despised by the Jewish people for sex irregularities, promiscuity or incest." If so, the priestly traditions (normative in Tosefta) sustain the most ancient view.

Suggested meanings of the word *mamzer* include: 1. "*Me am zar*" from an alien folk. 2. From the root *mzr*, meaning "he is deprived of seed."[5] 3. Another suggestion is to derive it from *mum zar* (B. Yeb. 71a), i.e., a strange defect. 4. Others understand the term to signify *ish muzar*, a strange person (Ramban, *Commentary on the Torah*, Deut. 23:3). All of these suggest that such a person is to be considered at the very fringe of Israelite society. Bar-Ilan[6] argues that in pre-Mishnaic times the *mamzer* was seen as a product of two people who were forbidden, under pain of extreme sanction, to have sexual relations. Accordingly, the child of the forbidden union was physically restricted from engaging in specific activities within the community. These included entering Jerusalem, learning or being taught Torah. Leaders would single out the house and the grave of the *mamzer* and whitewash it so that other Jews would avoid him.

Bar-Ilan points to T. Yeb. 3:1: "They asked R. Eliezer, does a *mamzer* inherit? . . . Does [a *mamzer*] plaster his house? Does [a *mamzer*] plaster his grave?" In dealing with issues we discover that economic ostracism included exclusion from the right of inheritance. He claims that they needed to be physically recognizable, shunned and prevented from intermingling with other members of the community. Bar-Ilan finds some evidence to suggest they were shaved bald and then washed with a substance which ensured that their hair would never grow back. These assertions remain speculative.

Still other modern scholars see early and tribal caste systems playing an essential role in the biblical injunctions against the *mamzer*. Cohen[7] argues that tainted blood was sufficient cause for categorizing the child as a *mamzer*. It made no difference whether the child was born of a mixed union, a free union between Jew and heathen, or between an unmarried Jewish girl and a Jewish man. In all these sexual unions the child was deemed a *mamzer*. Epstein[8] claims that, prior to the formulation of the Mishnah, the *mamzer* was defined as a child born of a mixed union, such as a sexual union with a non-Jew, harlot, or slave (as reflected in M. Qid. 3:12 and T. Qid. 4:16). We surmise that this interpretation of the *mamzer* was preserved in the Mishnah as a priestly custom and reflects a very old view.

Why would the rabbis introduce a more moderate ruling as normative? Clearly, they viewed the *mamzer* as the result of some immoral, forbidden union. They applied the interpretation of the following passage to the *mamzer*, "That which is crooked cannot be made straight, and that which is wanting cannot be reckoned" (Eccl. 1:15):

> R. Simeon ben Menasia says, "What is that which is crooked which cannot be made straight? This is one who has sexual relations with a woman in a forbidden relationship and produces a *mamzer* from her. If you should claim that it applies to a thief or a robber, he can make restitution and be made straight" (M. Hag. 1:7).

While such statements reflect on the Mishnah editors' negative attitude towards the stance and status of the *mamzer*, a thorough examination of Mishnaic texts reveals a mediating and softened focus on a topic which seemed of great concern to the early rabbis. It is taken for granted that *mamzerim* share the obligation of all other Jews in the

performance and observance of Jewish law and had the right to inherit. The rabbis of the Mishnah sought ways to steer a midcourse in dealing with the issue of *mamzer*, and limited the cases giving rise to one and the stigma attached to one. In caste issues of family purity they respected priestly, conservative interpretation; in all other issues they introduced humane concerns.

Modern scholars have advanced some opinions on this matter. They seek reasons for the Mishnah's change in attitude and limitation of the definition of and sanctions against the *mamzer*. In the absence of conclusive evidence scholars as Epstein[9] and Cohen[10] suggest the influence of Roman law upon the rabbis of the Mishnah, especially regarding the issue of Jews having children with non-Jews.

Bar-Ilan[11] suggests a socio-historical explanation. He argues that in the first three centuries C.E. during the transition to the Tannaic period at a time of Roman rule, the Jewish agricultural society was becoming increasingly modern and urban with greater influence and exposure to Graeco-Roman culture. This transformation also impacted on a strongly patriarchal family structure, now also following the mother for religious identification. Thus, a direct connection can be made between the urbanization process and the change in both family structure and the sexual conduct of its members. This new social reality then viewed the definition of *mamzer* differently. Society did not choose to cope or define the *mamzer* according to the strict understanding of the traditional society. Furthermore, the political situation of the post-Temple period, the time of the conquest of Jerusalem and Judea, when Jews were being persecuted and uprooted and women were being raped and taken captive, cannot be ignored. The social interaction between Jew and gentile was now much greater, leading to the tainting of pure family blood lines.[12] If the early definition of *mamzer* was used, the outcome was a rise in the numbers of *mamzerim*.

These speculations seem somewhat apart of rabbinic disdain for Jews intermingling with gentiles. Rather, we might find in Roman practice here the severe reaction for Tosefta's conservative rulings intended to drive more wedges in sexual contacts of Jews and gentiles. Most likely, the view which one adopted was that which suited the needs of the day best.

M. Hor. 3:8 states: "A priest takes precedence over a Levite, a Levite over an Israelite, an Israelite over a *mamzer*, a *mamzer* over a *Netin* (a descendent from the Gibeonites who had semi-Israelite status in the time of Joshua), *a Netin* over a proselyte, a proselyte over a freed slave." The Mishnah commentaries explain that the reason why the *mamzer* is to be classified higher then the *Netin*, the proselyte, and the freed slave is because he is, after all is said and done, still the child of a Jew. This passage may be presumed to understand the term *mamzer* as the product of a taboo union (one of those listed in Leviticus 18.) Such a hierarchy, however, reflects the *mamzer's* place in society, a status less than the common Jew. Interestingly enough, the Mishnah concludes that if the *mamzer* is a scholar—and the high priest is not—the *mamzer* takes precedence. This last statement is consonant with the agenda and philosophy of the rabbis of the Mishnah who emphasize, here not without irony, the overwhelming importance and status given to the proficient student of Torah. Here the Mishnah introduces an apologetic for the power of Torah study and in so doing mitigates the harsh judgment of the law of *mamzer*. After all, the *mamzer* has done nothing wrong at all. He/she is simply the result of the error of the parents. A *mamzer* may be a king. A similar hierarchy is presented in M. Qid. 4:1:

> Ten castes came up from Babylonia: Priests, Levites, Israelites, impaired priests, converts and freed slaves, *mamzerim*, *netinim*, children of unknown lineage and foundlings. Priests, Levites, and Israelites are permitted to marry among one another. Levites, Israelites, impaired priests, converts and freed slaves are permitted to marry among one another. Converts, freed slaves, *mamzerim*, *netinim*, children of unknown lineage and foundlings are permitted to marry among one another."

The Mishnah centers its discussion of *mamzer*'s irregular status around marriage, consonant with Deut. 23:3: "*shall be admitted into the congregation of the Lord*." The rabbis saw here a reference to marriage and likewise

ruled concerning Scripture's laws of Egyptian or Midianite converts. The issue of entering into the congregation of the Lord referred to marriage with a common Jew. Deut. 23:4: An Ammonite or a Moabite shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord; Deut. 23:9: The children of the third generation [Egyptian] that are born unto them may enter into congregation of the Lord.

But Mishnah also contains rules that discriminate against the *mamzer*. M. Hor. 1:4 excludes the *mamzer* from sitting as a judge on the *Sanhedrin* court because he cannot participate in the "congregation" and courts are viewed by Scripture as a kind of "congregation." M. Mak. 3:1 informs us that he who transgresses the law by having relations with a male or female *mamzer* is to be punished by flogging. "These are the ones who are flogged . . . a *mamzer* girl or a *netin* girl [having sexual relations] with an Israelite, an Israelite girl with a *netin* or with a *mamzer*."

That Tosefta accepts the most stringent, conservative view of *mamzer*, we have already noted. However, there is an exception which it has to proclaim. "The status of *mamzer* is not applicable to the offspring of a levirate marriage" (see T. Yeb. 11:5–9). Levirate marriages occurred between a childless widow and her brother-in-law, a union proscribed by Scripture while the husband lived. Once the husband died, levirate marriages were mandated by Scripture and so the offspring, to be named after the deceased husband, could never be considered spurious. In T. Yeb. 1:10 we read that the houses of Shammai and Hillel agreed on one point. The offspring of an incestuous union which was punishable by *karet* (extirpation) was a *mamzer*. That is to say, that neither one held the view of Joshua requiring a union punishable by death, and nothing short of that, in order to be deemed a *mamzer*. It is reasonable to assume that the houses were not as stringent as the general view propounded by the decisive view of Tosefta requiring merely a union with a slave or a gentile for the offspring to be deemed such. The Toseftan view echoes a concern for the complete purity of the Jewish line and in so doing would end sexual looseness with gentiles and slaves. Josephus makes it clear that according to the Law he was forbidden to accept the Roman wife given him by the Emperor while later he praises another wife who came from noble, priestly stock.

> T. Qid. 5:4 offers future hope:
> *Netinim* and *mamzers* will be clean in the World to Come, these are the words of R. Yose. R. Meir says, they will not be clean. Said to him R. Yose, but has it not truly been said, 'I will sprinkle water upon you, and you shall be clean' (Ezek. 36:25).
> Said to him R. Meir [this refers to idolatry as it says], 'and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses and from all your idols, I will cleanse you' (Ezek. 36:25).
> Said to him R. Yose, So why does Scripture need say, 'I shall cleanse you'? It means, even from the *netinim* and *mamzerim*."

The problems surrounding *mamzerut* are near impossible to surmount. Marriages contracted in the former Soviet Union but not dissolved through rabbinic authority play havoc in modern life. Women who remarry in these situations give birth to *mamzerim*. Likewise, groups of Jews who did not practice divorce procedures sanctioned by Jewish law because they were unknown in their countries of origin or were considered too old fashioned by modern taste have trouble marrying Orthodox Jews today. Some creative legal theories have been proposed by eminent authorities in these cases but no theory has gained universal acceptance. From the eleventh to fifteenth centuries, marriages between Jews and Karaites were prevalent enough to create severe problems. Rabbi David ben Solomon ibn Abi Zimra (Radbaz), response #73, decided the above intermarriages were completely illegal and did not require divorce proceedings to annul them. Hence the children of any marriage were simply children born out of wedlock and such children have no legal stigma attached to them whatsoever and may marry freely in the Jewish community. Similar rulings exist to this day in connection with Jews married under non-Orthodox auspices but have not gone unchallenged. As well, children who are foundlings or who have fathers with unknown lineages present other legal problems since they may be full Jews or may be *mamzerim*.

These problems have been dealt with in various ways with varying results and occupy

the minds of many rabbis when they are approached to perform weddings. To date no central registry exists to track known *mamzerim* and the problems of modern living and modern Jewish movements are of concern to *halakhic* minded Jews the world over.

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[1] Jenny Teichman, *Illegitimacy: An Examination of Bastardy* (Ithaca, 1982), p. 80.

[2] Ibid., p. 83.

[3] Adolph Büchler, *Studies in Jewish History* (London, New York, and Toronto, 1956), pp. 70–71.

[4] Louis Epstein, *Marriage Laws in the Bible and the Talmud* (Cambridge, MA, 1942), p. 279.

[5] See Meir Bar-Ilan, "The Attitude toward *Mamzerim* in Jewish Society in Late Antiquity," in *Jewish History* 14, 2000.

[6] Ibid., pp. 135, 139–141.

[7] Epstein, *Marriage*, p. 194.

[8] Ibid., p. 279.

[9] Ibid., p. 283.

[10] Boaz Cohen, "Some Remarks on the Laws of Persons in Jewish and Roman Jurisprudence," in *Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research* Volume 16, 1946–1947, pp. 35–37.

[11] Bar Ilan, "Attitude," pp. 143–145.

[12] Buchler, *Studies*, p. 71.

Masculine and Feminine in Judaism

JUDAISM in its classical documents joins traits explicitly marked as male to those explicitly classified as female and insists upon both in the formation of models of virtue. It therefore may be classified as androgynous, exhibiting the traits of both sexes as the religion itself defines those gender-qualities. In this world holy Israel is to emulate women's virtue as the condition of the coming of the Messiah. Women's capacity for devotion, selfless faith, and loyalty defines the model of what is required of Israel for its virtue.

GENDER ROLES AND THE JUDAIC SYSTEM

The sages of the normative writings, Mishnah, Talmud, Midrash, thought in terms of the holy community, not isolated individuals. Gender roles formed part of the larger statement that sages proposed to craft concerning the coherent life of the community overall. Sages' doctrine of feminine virtue, therefore, makes sense only within its larger systemic context. The dual Torah, beginning to end, taught that the Israelite was to exhibit the moral virtues of subservience, patience, endurance, and hope. These would translate into the emotional traits of humility and forbearance. And they would yield the social virtues of passivity and conciliation. The hero was one who overcame impulses; the truly virtuous person was the one who reconciled others by giving way before their opinions. All of these acts of self-abnegation and self-denial, accommodation rather than rebellion, required to begin with the right attitudes, sentiments, emotions, and impulses, and the single most dominant motif of the Rabbinic writings, start to finish, is their stress on the right attitude's leading to the right action, the correct intentionality's producing the besought decision. This required, above all, accommodating in one's heart to what could not be changed by one's action, specifically, the world as it was. Sages prepared Israel for the long centuries of subordination and alienation by inculcating attitudes that best suited people

who could govern little more than how they felt about things. As we shall now see, sages themselves classified the besought virtues as feminine, and they proposed to feminize Israel, the holy people.

Feminine and Masculine in Judaism

When we speak of virtues as feminine and masculine, it is not to perpetuate contemporary stereotypes, but to pay close attention to sages' own judgment of matters. How do we know how the framers of the dual Torah, who bear the title "our sages of blessed memory," classify virtues, whether as masculine or as feminine? In the classical writings we have several systematic exegeses that focus on women and therefore permit us to characterize sages' conception of women's virtues, and it will follow, the virtues they classify as feminine. Sages' reading of the Scriptural books of Ruth and Esther and their treatment of Miriam the prophetess and other scriptural prophetesses provide access to their thinking on what characterizes the virtuous woman.

Among the expositions pertinent to that matter, however, none more reliably records sages' conception of the feminine and of the feminine in relationship to the masculine than their reading of the Song of Songs in the exegetical compilation Song of Songs Rabbah, a writing contemporary with the Talmud of Babylonia, ca. 600. There, in reading the Song of Songs as a statement of the relationship of God and Israel, Israel is identified as the female-beloved, God as the male-lover. We need not speculate, therefore, on correct traits for women; in the document at hand, they are those explicitly assigned to feminine Israel. So we now turn to a brief survey of what is said in so many words. Because of the critical place of Song of Songs Rabbah in the representation of androgynous Judaism and, in particular, the definition of the feminine component of the androgyneity, I cite representative passages at considerable length.

God and Israel in the Metaphor of Husband and Wife

The first point is the most telling. The relationship of Israel to God is the same as the relationship of a wife to the husband, and this is explicit in Song of Songs Rabbah to Song 7:10:

> A. "I am my beloved's, and his desire is for me" (Song 7:10):
> B. There are three yearnings:
> C. The yearning of Israel is only for their Father who is in heaven, as it is said, "I am my beloved's, and his desire is for me."
> D. The yearning of a woman is only for her husband: "And your desire shall be for your husband" (Gen. 3:16).
> E. The yearning of the Evil Impulse is only for Cain and his ilk: "To you is its desire" (Gen. 4:7).

Here gender-relationships are explicitly characterized, and, with them, the traits associated with the genders as well.

The sages turn to everyday experience—the love of husband and wife—for a metaphor for God's love for Israel and Israel's love for God. And Israel is assigned the feminine role and the feminine virtues. It is difficult to identify a more extravagant form of praise for women's virtue, her capacity to love generously and in an act of unearned grace. When Solomon's song says, "O that you would kiss me with the kisses of your mouth! For your love is better than wine," (Song 1:2), sages of blessed memory think of how God kissed Israel. Reading the Song of Songs as a metaphor, the Judaic sages state in a systematic and orderly way their entire structure and system, and, along the way, permit us to identify the traits they associate with feminine Israel and masculine God, respectively. What is important here, however, is not the document's doctrinal message, but its implicit and tacit affirmations. The document does not set forth a great many explicit doctrines, but delivers its message through the description of attitudes and emotions. And our particular interest lies in the identification of the system's designative as feminine and masculine of clearly-defined attitudes and emotions. The writers mean to paint word-pictures, evoke feelings, speak empathetically, rather

than only sympathetically. Song of Songs Rabbah tells how to think and feel, so as to form a heart at one with God.

Masculine Virtue

No account of feminine virtue can accomplish its goals without cataloguing masculine virtue as well. Our survey of the feminine and the masculine in Song of Songs Rabbah begins with the clear characterization of God as masculine, Israel as feminine (6:2):

A. "My beloved has gone down to his garden, to the beds of spices, [to pasture his flock in the gardens, and to gather lilies]" (Song 6:2):
B. Said R. Yose b. R. Hanina, "As to this verse, the beginning of it is not the same as the end, and the end not the same as the beginning.
C. "The verse had only to say, 'My beloved has gone down to pasture in his garden,' but you say, 'in the gardens'!
D. "But 'my beloved' is the Holy One, blessed be he;
E. "'to his garden' refers to the world.
F. "'to the beds of spices' refers to Israel.
G. "'to pasture his flock in the gardens' refers to synagogues and school-houses.
H. "'and to gather lilies' speaks of picking [taking away in death] the righteous that are in Israel."

"My beloved" is God; the choice part of the garden, which is the world, is Israel, its synagogues and houses of study. Israel is now the faithful beloved, waiting patiently for her lover, always trusting in His faithfulness (Song of Songs Rabbah to Song 8:6).

A. "Set me as a seal upon your heart, as a seal upon your arm; for love is strong as death, jealousy is cruel as the grave. Its flashes are flashes of fire, a most vehement flame" (Song 8:6):
B. "for love is strong as death:"
C. As strong as death is the love with which the Holy One, blessed be he, loves Israel: "I have loved you says the Lord" (Mal. 1:2).
D. "jealousy is cruel as the grave:"
E. That is when they make him jealous with their idolatry: "They roused him to jealousy with strange gods" (Deut. 32:16). . . .
F. Another explanation of "for love is strong as death:"
G. As strong as death is the love with which a man loves his wife: "Enjoy life with the wife whom you love" (Prov. 9:9).
H. "jealousy is cruel as the grave:"
I. the jealousy that she causes in him and leads him to say to her, "Do not speak with such-and-so."
J. If she goes and speaks with that man, forthwith: "The spirit of jealousy comes upon him and he is jealous on account of his wife" (Num. 5:14).

Israel's feminine character is now well-established, and the ways in which the exegesis of the Song is worked out in response to that fact are clear. Then we have to ask ourselves, precisely what kind of relationship does feminine Israel have with the masculine God? The answer is, the relationship of a wife to a husband.

Feminine Israel

Israel's status as God's beloved yields two important results. First, the metaphor is treated as neuter, in that, even though Israel is feminine, that fact bears no material consequence for the representation of Israel. The repertoire of word-symbols that convey the principal components of the structure of faith is set forth in terms of what is simply a useful metaphor. But the metaphor is not realized, e.g., in the formulation of traits set forth as unique to women and unique to feminine Israel by reason of its femininity. Representative of many passages, the following, at Song of Songs Rabbah to Song 2:1, suffices to show how, despite the femininity of Israel, the framers are able to run through, without reference to gender, the principal elements of Israel's sacred history—Egypt, the Sea, Sinai, the subjugation to the kingdoms and the coming redemption by reason of Israel's faithfulness to the covenant:

A. "I am a rose of Sharon, [a lily of the valleys]" (Song 2:1):
B. Said the Community of Israel, "I am the one, and I am beloved.
C. "I am the one whom the Holy One, blessed be he, loved more than the seventy nations."
D. "I am a rose of Sharon:"
E. "For I made for him a shade through Bezalel [the words for shade and Bezalel

use the same consonants as the word for rose]: 'And Bezalel made the ark' (Exod. 38:1)."
F. "of Sharon:"
G. "For I said before him a song [which word uses the same consonants as the word for Sharon] through Moses:
H. "'Then sang Moses and the children of Israel' (Exod. 15:1)."
I. Another explanation of the phrase, "I am a rose of Sharon:"
J. Said the Community of Israel, "I am the one, and I am beloved.
K. "I am the one who was hidden in the shadow of Egypt, but in a brief moment the Holy One, blessed be he, brought me together to Raamses, and I blossomed forth in good deeds like a rose, and I said before him this song: 'You shall have a song as in the night when a feast is sanctified' (Is. 30:29)."
L. Another explanation of the phrase, "I am a rose of Sharon:"
M. Said the Community of Israel, "I am the one, and I am beloved.
N. "I am the one who was hidden in the shadow of the sea, but in a brief moment I blossomed forth in good deeds like a rose, and I pointed to him with the finger (opposite to me): 'This is my God and I will glorify him' (Exod. 15:2)."
O. Another explanation of the phrase, "I am a rose of Sharon:"
P. Said the Community of Israel, "I am the one, and I am beloved.
Q. "I am the one who was hidden in the shadow of Mount Sinai, but in a brief moment I blossomed forth in good deeds like a lily in hand and in heart, and I said before him, 'All that the Lord has said we will do and obey' (Exod. 24:7)."
R. Another explanation of the phrase, "I am a rose of Sharon:"
S. Said the Community of Israel, "I am the one, and I am beloved.
T. "I am the one who was hidden and downtrodden in the shadow of the kingdoms. But tomorrow, when the Holy One, blessed be he, redeems me from the shadow of the kingdoms, I shall blossom forth like a lily and say before him a new song: 'Sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvelous things, his right hand and his holy arm have wrought salvation for him' (Ps. 98:1)."

To make the point that its author wishes to register, the foregoing passage does not require that Israel be represented as feminine. Nor do traits identified with femininity emerge. What we have is simply a review of standard high points in sages' theology of Israel's history: Egypt, the Sea, Sinai, then the whole of the intervening history homogenized into the single, dreadful time of subjugation to the kingdoms, and, finally, redemption, to which we shall return at the end.

The virtues of wives, portrayed as feminine, once more are those of loyalty and submission. This metaphor is exploited through the invocation of the wife's trust in the husband, the mark of the perfect wife. Israel follows wherever Moses, in behalf of God, leads; Israel trusts in God the way a woman who has accepted marriage trusts her husband (Song of Songs Rabbah to Song 4:12):

A. Berekhiah in the name of R. Judah b. R. Ilai: "It is written, 'And Moses led Israel onward from the Red Sea' (Exod. 15:22):
B. "He led them on from the sin committed at the sea.
C. "They said to him, 'Moses, our lord, where are you leading us?'
D. "He said to them, 'To Elim, from Elim to Alush, from Alush to Marah, from Marah to Rephidim, from Rephidim to Sinai.'
E. "They said to him, 'Indeed, wherever you go and lead us, we are with you.'
F. "The matter is comparable to the case of one who went and married a woman from a village. He said to her, 'Arise and come with me.'
G. "She said to him, 'From here to where?'
H. "He said to her, 'From here to Tiberias, from Tiberias to the Tannery, from the Tannery to the Upper Market, from the Upper Market to the Lower Market.'
I. "She said to him, 'Wherever you go and take me, I shall go with you.'
J. "So said the Israelites, 'My soul cleaves to you' (Ps. 63:9)."

Israel's feminine virtue must exceed even the wife's trust in the husband's protection. Israel also must care only for God, the way a wife's entire desire is solely for her husband. The point is unmistakable and critical. Israel is subject to an oath to wait patiently for God's redemption, not to rebel against the nations on its own; that is the concrete social politics meant to derive from the analogy of Israel's relationship to God to the wife's relationship to the husband: perfect submission, and also perfect trust. Rebellion against the nations stands for arrogance on Israel's part, an act of lack of

trust and therefore lack of faithfulness. Implicit in this representation of the right relationship, of course, is the promise that feminine Israel will evoke from the masculine God the response of commitment and intervention: God will intervene to save Israel when Israel makes herself into the perfect wife of God.

The upshot is, Israel must fulfill the vocation of a woman, turn itself into a woman, serve God as a wife serves a husband. The question then follows: is it possible that the Judaism that has treated the present document as canonical asks men to turn themselves into women? And the answer is, that demand is stated in so many words. Here we find a full statement of the feminization of the masculine. The two brothers, Moses and Aaron, are compared to Israel's breasts, a reversal of gender-classifications that can hardly be more extreme or dramatic (Song of Songs Rabbah to Song 4:5):

A. "Your two breasts are like two fawns, twins of a gazelle, that feed among the lilies" (Song 4:5):
B. "Your two breasts are like two fawns:"
C. this refers to Moses and Aaron.
D. Just as a woman's breasts are her glory and her ornament,
E. so Moses and Aaron are the glory and the ornament of Israel.
F. Just as a woman's breasts are her charm, so Moses and Aaron are the charm of Israel.
G. Just as a woman's breasts are her honor and her praise, so Moses and Aaron are the honor and praise of Israel.
H. Just as a woman's breasts are full of milk, so Moses and Aaron are full of Torah.
I. Just as whatever a woman eats the infant eats and sucks, so all the Torah that our lord, Moses, learned he taught to Aaron: "And Moses told Aaron all the words of the Lord" (Exod. 4:28).
J. And rabbis say, "He actually revealed the Ineffable Name of God to him."
K. Just as one breast is not larger than the other, so Moses and Aaron were the same: "These are Moses and Aaron" (Exod. 6:27), "These are Aaron and Moses" (Exod. 6:26), so that in knowledge of the Torah Moses was not greater than Aaron, and Aaron was not greater than Moses.
L. Happy are these two brothers, who were created only for the glory of Israel.
M. That is what Samuel said, "It is the Lord that made Moses and Aaron and brought your fathers up" (1 Sam. 12:6).
N. Thus "Your two breasts are like two fawns:"
O. this refers to Moses and Aaron.

Not only are Moses and Aaron represented through feminine metaphors, so too are Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as well as the tribal progenitors, Jacob's sons.

In the following, feminine Israel is ornamented by all of the jewelry contained in the treasure of the Torah: all of the acts of faith are paraded as marks of the beauty of Israel in the explicit setting of Israel's feminine relationship to the masculine God (Song of Songs Rabbah to Song 1:15):

A. "Behold, you are beautiful, my love; behold, you are beautiful; [your eyes are doves]" (Song 1:15):
B. "Behold you are beautiful" in religious deeds,
C. "Behold you are beautiful" in acts of grace,
D. "Behold you are beautiful" in carrying out religious obligations of commission,
E. "Behold you are beautiful" in carrying out religious obligations of omission,
F. "Behold you are beautiful" in carrying out the religious duties of the home, in separating priestly ration and tithes,
G. "Behold you are beautiful" in carrying out the religious duties of the field, gleanings, forgotten sheaves, the corner of the field, poor person's tithe, and declaring the field ownerless.
H. "Behold you are beautiful" in observing the taboo against mixed species.
I. "Behold you are beautiful" in providing a linen cloak with woolen show-fringes.
J. "Behold you are beautiful" in [keeping the rules governing] planting,
K. "Behold you are beautiful" in keeping the taboo on uncircumcised produce,
L. "Behold you are beautiful" in keeping the laws on produce in the fourth year after the planting of an orchard,
M. "Behold you are beautiful" in circumcision,
N. "Behold you are beautiful" in trimming the wound,
O. "Behold you are beautiful" in reciting the Prayer,
P. "Behold you are beautiful" in reciting the Shema,
Q. "Behold you are beautiful" in putting a mezuzah on the doorpost of your house,
R. "Behold you are beautiful" in wearing phylacteries,
S. "Behold you are beautiful" in building the tabernacle for the Festival of Tabernacles,

T. "Behold you are beautiful" in taking the palm branch and etrog on the Festival of Tabernacles,
U. "Behold you are beautiful" in repentance,
V. "Behold you are beautiful" in good deeds,
W. "Behold you are beautiful" in this world,
X. "Behold you are beautiful" in the world to come.

Israel, then, is to exhibit the virtues explicitly assigned to women. God responds in a masculine manner. The feminine and masculine virtues complement one another, and neither is complete without the other. The process comes to fulfillment in the representation as feminine of all of the virtues, all of the saints and heroes, all of the acts of sanctification that God has commanded and that submissive Israel carries out. Once Israel is feminized, so too is everything else. Then the feminine virtues—submission, trust, perfect loyalty—are adopted by Israel. But that is only for now.

Sexuality and Theology

How does the sexual imagery convey deep theological meaning? The message of Song of Songs Rabbah is that, if Israel is feminine now, she will resume her masculinity in the world to come. That is a much more subtle and profound statement, a judgment on the androgyneity of Israel that makes the union of traits, feminine and masculine, something other than a static portrait of a world at rest. In fact, the metaphor of the feminine Israel and the masculine God is subsumed within the more profound message of redemption and carries a critical element in that message: Israel must be patient, submissive, and deeply trusting in God now, so that, in the world to come, Israel may resume its fulfilled masculinity. In this age, Israel to God is as a wife to a husband. But in the age to come, Israel assumes masculine identity. It follows that Israel is represented as androgyne, feminine, then masculine (Song of Songs Rabbah to Song 5:3):

A. Berekhiah in the name of R. Samuel b. R. Nahman said, "The Israelites are compared to a woman.
B. "Just as an unmarried women receives a tenth part of the property of her father and takes her leave [for her husband's house when she gets married], so the Israelites inherited the land of the seven peoples, who form a tenth part of the seventy nations of the world.
C. "And because the Israelites inherited in the status of a woman, they said a song in the feminine form of that word, as in the following: 'Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song [given in the feminine form] unto the Lord' (Exod. 15:1).
D. "But in the age to come they are destined to inherit like a man, who inherits all of the property of his father.
E. "That is in line with this verse of Scripture: 'From the east side to the west side: Judah, one portion . . . Dan one, Asher one . . .' (Ez. 48:7), and so throughout.
F. "Then they will say a song in the masculine form of that word, as in the following: 'Sing to the Lord a new song' (Ps. 96:1).
G. "The word 'song' is given not in its feminine form but in its masculine form."
H. Berekiah and R. Joshua b. Levi: "Why are the Israelites compared to a woman?
I. "Just as a woman takes up a burden and puts it down [that is, becomes pregnant and gives birth], takes up a burden and puts it down, then takes up a burden and puts it down and then takes up no further burden,
J. "so the Israelites are subjugated and then redeemed, subjugated and then redeemed, but in the end are redeemed and will never again be subjugated.
K. "In this world, since their anguish is like the anguish of a woman in childbirth, they say the song before him using the feminine form of the word for song,
L. "but in the age to come, because their anguish will no longer be the anguish of a woman in childbirth, they will say their song using the masculine form of the word for song:
M. "'In that day this song [in the masculine form of the word] will be sung' (Is. 26:1)."

So the real message lies in the femininity of Israel in this world in contrast to its masculinity in the world to come. Not only so, but there is another qualification of considerable urgency. It is that feminine Israel is masculine in its aggressive relationship to the nations, and here, once more, we find what we may call temporal—or serial—androgyneity: feminine now, masculine in

the age to come. It hardly needs repetition that the system is the work of men and states a masculine viewpoint, which makes the systemic androgyneity all the more remarkable. Israel is one thing to God, another to the nations; feminine and submissive to God, masculine and aggressive to the nations of the world. That point is now fundamental in our characterization of the whole. Israel is feminized only for a time; Israel is fully masculine in the end of time.

Serial Androgeneity

Israel is serially androgynous: now feminine, later on, masculine. The following makes this point in respect to God as well, who responds to Israel's character (Song of Songs Rabbah to Song 5:10):

A. ["What is your beloved more than another beloved, O fairest among women! What is your beloved more than another beloved, that you thus adjure us?;" Song 5:9]
B. "My beloved is all radiant and ruddy, distinguished among ten thousand" [Song 5:10).
C. The Israelites answer them, "My beloved is all radiant and ruddy."
D. "radiant:" to me in the land of Egypt,
E. "and ruddy:" to the Egyptians.
F. "radiant:" in the land of Egypt, "For I will go through the land of Egypt" (Exod. 12:13).
G. "and ruddy:" "And the Lord overthrew the Egyptians" (Exod. 14:27).
H. "radiant:" at the Sea: "The children of Israel walked upon dry land in the midst of the sea" (Exod. 14:29).
I. "and ruddy:" to the Egyptians at the Sea: "And the Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea" (Exod. 14:27).
J. "radiant:" in the world to come.
K. "and ruddy:" in this world.
L. Levi b. R. Hayyata made three statements concerning the matter:
M. "'radiant:' on the Sabbath.
N. "'and ruddy:' on the other days of the week.
O. "radiant:" on the New Year.
P. "and ruddy:" on the other days of the year.
Q. "'radiant:' in this world.
R. "'and ruddy:' in the world to come.
S. "distinguished among ten thousand:"
T. Said R. Abba b. R. Kahana, "A mortal king is known by his ceremonial garments, but here, he is fire and his ministers are fire: 'And he came from the myriads holy' (Deut. 33:2).
U. "He is marked in the midst of 'the myriads holy.'"

Israel now is governed by others and so is deemed passive and, therefore, is classified by the patriarchal document as feminine. Israel is whole with God, but God and Israel cannot make peace with the nations of the world except on God's terms. In a subsequent passage, on Song 6:13, the invocation of the metaphor of dance, with God as the leader, Israel as the partner, underscores the wholly feminine representation of Israel once more: "like women—like the dance of the righteous." Then feminine Israel plays the role of the wife who stands as mediator between her husband and the world at large; the mother who holds the family together, now the family of the nations and the master, who is God.

Feminine and Masculine Emotions

The emotions encouraged by Judaism in its formative age, such as humility, forbearance, accommodation, a spirit of conciliation, exactly correspond to the political and social requirements of the Jews' condition in that time. The reason that the same repertoire of emotions persisted with no material change through the unfolding of the writings of the sages of that formative age was the constancy of the Jews' political and social condition. Emotions lay down judgments. They derive from rational cognition. What Judaism teaches the private person to feel links her or his heart to what Judaism states about the condition of Israel in history and of God in the cosmos. All form one reality, in supernatural world and nature, in time and in eternity wholly consubstantial (so to speak). In the innermost chambers of deepest feelings, the Israelite therefore lives out the public history and destiny of the people, Israel. The genius of Judaism, reason for its resilience and endurance, lies in its power to teach Jews in private to feel what in public they also must think about the condition of both self and

nation. The world within, the world without, are so bonded, that one is never alone. The individual's life always is lived with the people. And, we now realize, the virtuous man, as much as the virtuous woman, will exhibit women's virtues of attitude and emotion.

An epitome of the sages' treatment of emotions yields a simple result. Early, middle, and late, a single doctrine and program dictated what people had to say on how Israel should tame its heart. Israel's virtues were to be those of the woman-Israel of Song of Songs Rabbah. And it is not difficult to see why. In this world, Israel was a vanquished nation, possessed of a broken spirit. Sages' Judaism for a defeated people prepared the nation for a long future. The vanquished people, the broken-hearted nation that had lost its city and its temple, had, moreover, produced another nation from its midst to take over its Scripture and much else. That defeated people, in its intellectuals, as represented in the Rabbinic sources, found refuge in a mode of thought that trained vision to see other things otherwise than as the eyes perceived them. And that general way of seeing things accounts also for the specific matter of the feminization of Israel: Israel now was to endure as a woman, so that, in the age to come, it would resume its masculine position among the nations: dominant and determinative. Among the diverse ways by which the weak and subordinated accommodate to their circumstance, the one of iron-willed pretense in life is most likely to yield the mode of thought at hand: things never are, because they cannot be, what they seem. The uniform tradition on emotions persisted intact because the social realities of Israel's life proved permanent, until, in our own time, they changed. The upshot was that Rabbinic Judaism's Israel was instructed on how to tame its heart and govern its wild emotions, to accept with resignation, to endure with patience, above all, to value the attitudes and emotions that made acceptance and reconciliation into matters of honor and dignity, and, therefore, also made endurance plausible: imitate the feminine virtues.

Deviations from the Gender-Ideal

How does the system treat deviation? In narrow terms, we refer to matters that Judaism in its classical statement does not contemplate. Reading the story of the creation of man and woman to state the norm, not only the normal, sages insisted that celibacy and monasticism contradict the way God formed nature: "It is not good for man to be alone; I will make a fitting helper for him" (Gen. 2:18); "Hence a man leaves his father and mother and clings to his wife, so that they become one flesh" (Gen. 2:24). These statements are taken explicitly to require marriage and the making of a family. The law of Judaism, set forth in the Mishnah and amplified in the two Talmuds, does not contemplate spinsterhood. The natural condition of woman, as we shall see, is marriage, and the correct location, a household—an extended family that also formed a unit of economic production. If a woman was widowed or divorced without children, she returned to her father's household, until she remarried. It was generally assumed that she would remarry within a year. Childlessness was never by intent. A single model prevailed: the woman married and in charge of her household—exactly as Proverbs 9:9, cited above, indicates.

And yet, were we to complete our account with the preceding paragraph, we should miss the critical, indeed the central concept of the classical statement of Judaism, one that feminizes the system at its very heart. It is the point at which the system does address deviancy in two of its critical aspects, first, the deviancy represented by ignorance of the Torah, and, second, the deviancy represented by sexuality in the form of prostitution. Here we come across what the Judaic system abhors: failure to master the Torah and therefore to know God as God is self-manifest; and, second, failure to take a position within the social order of holy Israel, God's community. The unlettered man, the society of whores—these represent the outer limits of the Israelite world. And here, we shall see in the following section, we come to the systemic center: the reversal of all rules, the transformation of

all values. How so? In the texts we shall now discuss, the ignorant man embodies the highest virtue. The woman ready to sell her body realizes the deepest ideal. And, not only so, but, when all is said and done, it is the virtue represented by the deviant that is set forth as the center and soul of Judaism.

Zekhut—the Heritage of Virtue and Its Consequent Entitlements

While people suppose that the Torah forms the symbolic center of Rabbinic Judaism, and study of the Torah the critical action, so that women, excluded from academies, find no place in Rabbinic Judaism at all, in fact when we reach the systemic center, we find that "the study of Torah" does not outweigh all else, not at all. Even the stories contained in the Talmud of the Land of Israel in which the priority and sanctity of the sage's knowledge of the Torah form the focus of discourse treat study of the Torah as contingent and merely instrumental. Time and again, knowledge of the Torah forms a way-station on a path to a more distant, more central goal: attaining *zekhut*, here translated as "the heritage of virtue and its consequent entitlements." Zekhut embodies the sages' own definition of feminine virtue. Torah-study is one means of attaining access to that heritage, of gaining *zekhut*. There are other equally suitable means, and, not only so, but the merit gained by Torah-study is no different from the merit gained by any and all other types of acts of supererogatory grace. And still more astonishing, a single remarkable action may produce *zekhut* of the same order as a lifetime of devotion to Torah-study, and a simple ass-driver through a noteworthy act of selfless behavior may attain the same level of *zekhut* as a learned sage.

Zekhut is gained for a person by an act of renunciation and self-abnegation, such that Heaven responds with an act of grace. Works of supererogation, which Heaven cannot compel but highly prizes, *zekhut* defines the very opposite of coercion. It is an act that no one could anticipate or demand, but an act of such remarkable selflessness that Heaven finds itself constrained to respond. That is why the systemic center is formed by an act, on Heaven's part, of responsive grace, meaning, grace one by definition cannot demand or compel, but only provoke. When we make ourselves less, Heaven makes us more; but we cannot force our will upon Heaven. When we ask about the feminization of Judaism, our attention rests upon this fact: the right relationship between Israel and God is the relationship that is not coerced, not manipulated, not imposed by a dominant party upon a subordinated one. It is a relationship of mutuality, negotiation, response to what is freely given through what cannot be demanded but only volunteered. The relationship, in other words, is a feminine, not a masculine, one, when measured by the prevailing, conventional stereotypes.

It is where Heaven cannot force its will upon us that *zekhut* intervenes. It is that exquisite balance between our will and Heaven's will that, in the end, brings to its perfect balance and entire fulfillment the exploration of the conflict of God's will and our will that began with Adam and Eve at their last hour in Eden, and our first hour on earth. And, in context, the fact that we may inherit a treasury of *zekhut* from our ancestors logically follows: just as we inherit the human condition of the freedom to practice rebellion against God's word, so we inherit, from former generations, the results of another dimension of the human condition: our power to give willingly what none, even God, can by right or rule compel.

That is why the structure of Israel's political economy rested upon divine response to acts of will consisting of submission, on one's own, to the will of Heaven; these acts endowed Israel with a lien and entitlement upon Heaven. What we cannot by our own will impose, we can by the act of renunciation of our own will evoke. What we cannot accomplish through coercion, we can achieve through submission. God will do for us what we cannot do for ourselves, when we do for God what God cannot make us do. And that means, in a wholly concrete and tangible sense, love God with

all the heart, the soul, the might, we have. God then stands above the rules of the created world, because God will respond not to what we do in conformity to the rules alone, but also to what we do beyond the requirement of the rules. God is above the rules, and we can gain a response from God when, on some one, unique occasion, we too do more than obey—but love, spontaneously and all at once, with the whole of our being. That is the conception of God that *zekhut*, as a conception of power in Heaven and power in humanity, contains. In the relationship between God and humanity expressed in the conception of *Zekhut*, we reach the understanding of what the Torah means when it tells us that we are in God's image and after God's likeness: we are then, "in our image," the very mirror-image of God. God's will forms the mirror-image of ours: when we are humble, God responds; when we demand, God withdraws.

When we come to the way in which *zekhut* is set forth, we find ourselves in a set of narratives of a rather special order. What is special about them is that women play a critical role, appear as heroines, win the attention and respect of the reader or listener. It is difficult to locate in Rabbinic literature before the Talmud of the Land of Israel—in the Mishnah, the Tosefta, or Sifra, for instance—stories in which women figure at all. So to take up a whole series of stories in which women are key-players comes as a surprise. But there is more. The story-teller on the surface makes the man the hero; he is the center of the narrative. And yet a second glance at what is coming shows us that the woman precipitates the tale, and her action, not the man's, represents the gift that cannot be compelled but only given; she is the one who freely sacrifices, and she also is represented as the source of wisdom. So our systemic reversal—something above the Torah and the study of the Torah takes priority—is matched by a still-less-predictable shift in narrative quality, with women portrayed as principal actors.

The three following texts define what the individual must do to gain *zekhut*. The point is that the deeds of the heroes of the story make them worthy of having their prayers answered, which is a mark of the working of *zekhut*. It is supererogatory, uncoerced deeds, those well beyond the strict requirements of the Torah, and even the limits of the law altogether, that transform the hero into a holy man, whose holiness served just like that of a sage marked as such by knowledge of the Torah The story that conveys the concept tells about the *zekhut* attained by a humble, poor, ignorant man. It is narrated to underline what he has done. But what provokes the event is an act of self-abnegation far greater than that willingly performed by the male hero, which is, the woman's readiness to sell herself into prostitution to save her husband. That is not a focus of the story but the given. But nothing has compelled the woman to surrender her body to save her husband; to the contrary, the marital obligations of a woman concern only conventional deeds, which indeed the Mishnah's law maintains may be coerced; failure to do these deeds may result in financial penalties inflicted on the woman in the settlement of her marriage-contract. So the story of the uncoerced act of selflessness is told about a man, but occasioned by a woman, and both actors in the story exhibit one and the same virtue.

Women at the Center of the System of Zekhut

We note that, at the systemic center, women find entire equality with men; with no role whatever in the study of the Torah and no possibility of attaining political sagacity, women find a critical place in the sequence of actions that elicit from Heaven the admiring response that *zekhut* embodies. Indeed, a second reading of the stories shows that the hero is second to the heroine; it is the woman who, in each case, precipitates the occasion for the man's attainment of *zekhut*, and she, not he, exemplifies the highest pinnacle of selfless virtue. It follows, once more, that those reversals that signal the systemic center culminate in the (for so male a system as this one) ultimate reversal: woman at the height. Just as Torah-learning is subordinated, so man is subordinated; *zekhut*, the gift that can be given but not compelled, like love, in an unerring sense must

be called the female virtue that sets atop a male system and structure.

It goes without saying that none of these stories refers explicitly to *zekhut*; all of them tell us about what it means to enjoy not an entitlement by inheritance alone, but a lien accomplished by one's own supererogatory acts of restraint. *Zekhut* integrates what has been differentiated. Holding together learning, virtue, and supernatural standing, by explaining how Torah-study transforms the learning man, *zekhut* further makes implausible those points of distinction between economics and politics that bore the systemic message of the Rabbis' initial philosophy, expressed in particular in the Mishnah. Hierarchical classification, with its demonstration of the upward-reaching unity of all being, gives way in the evolution of Rabbinic Judaism to a different and more compelling proposition: the unity of all being within the heritage of *zekhut*, to be attained equally and without differentiation in all the principal parts of the social order. The definition of *zekhut* therefore carries us to the heart of the integrating and integrated religious system of Judaism. And, we now see, at the center of matters is the virtue that sages themselves classify as feminine and can set forth only in the persons of women.

JACOB NEUSNER

Medical Ethics of Judaism[1]

RECENT advances in biomedical technology and therapeutic procedures have generated a moral crisis in modern medicine. The vast strides made in medical science and technology have created options that only a few decades earlier would have been relegated to the realm of science fiction. To a significant degree, humans now have the ability to exercise control over not only the ravages of disease but even over the very process of life and death. With the unfolding of new discoveries and techniques, the scientific and intellectual communities have developed a keen awareness of the ethical issues that arise out of our enhanced ability to control our destiny. In response to the concern for questions of this nature, the rapidly developing field of biomedical ethics has emerged.

Jews, to whom questions of medical ethics are quests not only for applicable humanitarian principles but also for divine guidance, must, of necessity, seek answers in the teachings of the Torah. "The Torah of God is perfect" (Ps. 19:8), and the discerning student will find its teachings eternally valid even in responding to newly-formulated queries. As physicians and patients turn to Rabbinic authorities for answers, Jewish scholars seek to elucidate and expound the teachings of the Torah in these areas of profound concern.

Judaism is guided by the concepts of the supreme sanctity of human life and of the dignity of humankind created in the image of God. The preservation of human life in Judaism is a divine commandment. Jewish law requires physicians to do everything in their power to prolong life but prohibits the use of measures that prolong the act of dying. The value attached to human life in Judaism is far greater than that in Christian tradition or in Anglo-Saxon common law. In order to save a life, all Jewish religious laws are automatically suspended; the only exceptions are those prohibiting idolatry, murder, and forbidden sexual relations such as incest. In Jewish law and moral teaching, the value of human life is infinite and beyond measure, so that any part of life—even if only an hour or a second—is of precisely the same worth as seventy years of it.

In Judaism, the practice of medicine by a physician does not constitute an interference with the deliberate designs of divine providence. A physician does not play God by practicing medicine. In fact, a human physician not only has divine license to heal but is, in fact, obligated to heal. A physician in Judaism is prohibited from withholding healing skills and is not allowed to refuse to heal unless doing so would seriously endanger his or her own life.

Judaism is a "right-to-life" religion. This obligation to save lives is not only individual but also communal. A physician, who has knowledge and expertise far greater than that of a lay-person, is obligated to use medical skills to heal the sick and thereby prolong and preserve life. It is erroneous to suppose that having recourse to medicine shows lack of trust and confidence in God, the Healer. The Bible takes for granted the use of medical therapy and actually demands it. Although it is permissible but not mandatory in Jewish law to study medicine, a person who becomes a physician is obligated to use his skills and knowledge to heal the sick.

In Judaism, not only is a physician obligated to heal, but a patient is obligated to seek healing from human physicians and not rely only on faith healing. The Talmud states that no wise person should reside in a city that does not have a physician. The twelfth century Jewish scholar and physician Moses Maimonides rules that it is obligatory upon man to accustom himself to a regimen which preserves the body's health, and heals and fortifies it when it is ailing.

The extreme concern in Judaism about the preservation of health and the prolongation of life require that a woman's pregnancy be terminated if her life is in danger because of the pregnancy, that a woman use contraception if her life would be threatened by pregnancy, that an organ transplant be performed if it can save or prolong the life of a patient dying of organ failure, and that a postmortem examination be performed if the results of the autopsy may provide immediate lifesaving information to rescue another dying patient. Judaism also allows patients to accept experimental medical or surgical treatments provided no standard therapy is available and provided that the experimental therapy is administered by the most experienced physicians whose intent is to help the patient and not to just satisfy their academic curiosity. While Judaism prohibits cruelty to animals, it sanctions experimentation on animals to find cures for human illnesses, as long as the animal experiences little or no pain and suffering.

In Judaism, the infinite value of human life prohibits euthanasia or mercy killing in any form. Handicapped newborns, mentally retarded persons, psychotic persons, and patients dying of any illness or cause have the same right to life as anyone else, and nothing may be done to hasten their death. On the other hand, Judaism recognizes times when specific medical or surgical therapy is no longer indicated nor appropriate or desirable for a patient who is irreversibly, terminally ill. Under no circumstances, however, can general supportive care, including food and water, be withheld or withdrawn to hasten a patient's death.

In summary, Judaism considers each human being to be of supreme and infinite value. It is the obligation of individuals and society in general to preserve, hallow, and dignify human life and to care for the total needs of all persons to enable them to be healthy and productive members of society. This fundamental principle of the sanctity of life and the dignity of humankind as a creation of God is the underlying axiom upon which all medical ethical decision-making is based.

Sexuality and Procreation, Contraception

The importance of the biblical commandment to *be fruitful and multiply*, decreed first to Adam and Eve (Gen. 1:28), later to Noah and his sons (Gen. 9:1 and 9:7), and then to Jacob (Gen. 35:11), is discussed at B. Yeb. 63b as follows:

> Rabbi Eliezer stated: "He who does not engage in propagation of the race is as though he sheds blood, for it is said, 'Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed' (Gen. 9:6). And this is immediately followed by the text, 'And you, be fruitful and multiply' (Gen. 9:7)." Rabbi Jacob said: "As though he has diminished the Divine Image, since it is said, 'For God made man in his own image' (Gen. 9:6), and this is immediately followed by 'And you, be fruitful and multiply.'" Ben Azzai said: "As though he sheds blood *and* diminishes the Divine Image."

Although one technically fulfills the command ment of procreation when one sires two children, there is another biblical precept of propagating the race. Therefore, contraception

without specific medical or psychiatric indication is not condoned in Judaism even after one already has two children.

In a Jewish marriage, over and above the question of procreation, exist the conjugal rights of the wife, technically termed *onah*. Thus, nonprocreative intercourse—such as occurs when the wife is too young to bear children, when the wife is barren, pregnant, or postmenopausal, or following a hysterectomy—is not only allowed but required. The prohibition against improper emission of seed (*hashchatat zera*) is not involved or is canceled out so long as the intercourse is in the manner of procreation. Not only are such sexual activities permitted, but they are required by biblical law (see Ex. 21:10). "Marriage and marital relations are both independent of procreation, achieving the many desiderata spoken of in talmudic, *responsa* and mystic literatures."[2] Such goals include fulfilling the wife's desire, allowing physical release of the husband's sexual pressures, and maintaining marital harmony and domestic peace.

Several methods of contraception are described in the Bible and Talmud. *Coitus interruptus*, perhaps the sin or Er and Onen (Gen. 38:7–10) is unequivocally condemned as stated by Maimonides (Mishneh Torah, *Hilchot Issurei Biyah* 21:18):

> It is forbidden to expend semen to no purpose. Consequently, a man should not thresh within and ejaculate without. . . . As for masturbators, not only do they commit a strictly forbidden act, but they are also excommunicated. Concerning them it is written, "Your hands are full of blood" (Is. 1:15), and it is regarded as equivalent to killing a human being.

A similar prohibition is found in all other codes of Jewish law. The Talmud discusses four methods and techniques employed by women to prevent conception: using the safe period, making twisting movements following intercourse, using an oral contraceptive, and using an absorbent material during intercourse. There seems to be no impropriety in the use of the safe period when birth control is required, such as in situations of hazard to the mother. By its use, however, the commandment of procreation and the wife's conjugal rights (*onah*) are both frustrated. Furthermore, the unreliability of this method makes it unacceptable in cases of danger to life.

An ancient method of contraception involves the woman's making violent and twisting movements following intercourse in order to spill her husband's seed. This method is described in the Talmud by Rabbi Jose, who is of the opinion that "a woman who plays harlot turns over in order to prevent conception" (B. Ket. 37a). The Talmud further entitles a woman to receive her marriage settlement (*ketubah*) if the husband imposes a vow obligating her to produce violent movements immediately after intercourse to avoid conception (ibid.).

At least two talmudic discussions speak of a "cup of roots" or sterility potion (B. Yeb. 65b and B. Shab. 109b-110a). The ingredients of this oral contraceptive potion are enumerated at B. Shab. 110a and include Alexandrian gum, liquid alum, and garden crocus, pulverized and mixed with beer or wine. The oral contraceptive Pill of today seems equivalent under the law to this cup of roots. It allows intercourse to proceed in a natural and unimpeded manner, thus allowing fulfillment of the wife's conjugal rights. Furthermore, whereas the effect of the cup of roots is permanent, the effect of the Pill is temporary. No improper emission of seed is involved in the use of the Pill.[3] It appears, however, that without medical indication oral contraceptives should not be used before the commandment of procreation (that is, the birth of at least two children) is fulfilled. Furthermore, the question of the safety of the Pill is of both medical and Jewish legal concern. Certainly, women for whom medical contraindications make the use of oral contraceptives dangerous would be prohibited by Jewish law from taking them. Other deleterious side effects must also be taken into consideration. At the moment, however, the Pill seems to be the least objectionable method of birth control in Jewish law.

An enormous body of Rabbinic *responsa* deals with contraception. The most permissive view is that of sixteenth-century Rabbi Shlomo Luria, who allows the wife to apply a tampon before intercourse if a conception and pregnancy would prove dangerous.

Many subsequent writers have supported this view. On the other hand, a school of nonpermissivists does not allow any impediment to natural intercourse.

When pregnancy would be hazardous, the pessary or diaphragm is allowed by numerous authorities because it does not interfere with the normal coital act. This is not the case with the condom, which constitutes an improper interference and is strictly prohibited. Chemical spermicides and douches are other contraceptive methods that leave the sex act alone and are thus permitted by many *responsa* writers, although only in the case of danger to the mother from pregnancy. Whether spermicides or diaphragms are preferable under Jewish law is a matter of debate. As for intrauterine contraceptive devices, recent medical evidence indicates that these prevent conception by inhibiting proper implantation of the fertilized ovum in the wall of the uterus. If this is so, then their abortifacient action would prohibit their use, as their action is akin to abortion.

In summary, Jewish authorities prohibit contraception by any method when no medical or psychiatric threat to the mother or child exists. The duty of procreation, which is primarily a commandment to men, coupled with the conjugal rights of the wife in Jewish law, militates against the use of the condom, *coitus interruptus*, or abstinence under any circumstances. When pregnancy would be hazardous, and when the use of birth control is given Rabbinic sanction, a hierarchy of acceptability emerges from the talmudic and later Rabbinic sources. Most acceptable are contraceptive means that least interfere with the natural sexual act and that permit the full mobility of the sperm along its natural course. According to Feldman, "Oral contraception by pill enjoys preferred status as the least objectionable method of birth control."[4]

Artificial Insemination

The possibility of pregnancy without the sexual union of man and woman was recognized by the sages of the Talmud (B. Hag. 14b), who believed a pregnant virgin when she denied having coitus. She may have accidentally conceived in a bathhouse where a man had previously discharged semen, reasoned the rabbis. Other Jewish sources support the possibility of pregnancy *sine concubito*. Legal and ethical questions relating to a physician's intentionally inseminating a woman without her having coitus with the sperm donor are as follow.[5]

Artificial insemination using the semen of a donor (AID) other than the husband is considered by most Rabbinic opinion to be an abomination and strictly prohibited for a variety of reasons. Some authorities regard AID as adultery, which would require the husband to divorce his wife and the wife to forfeit the *ketubah* (marriage settlement or contract). These authorities further regard the physician and the donor as guilty for involvement in this act akin to adultery. Most Rabbinic opinion, however, states that when a sexual act is not involved, the woman is not guilty of adultery and is not prohibited from continued cohabitation with her husband.

Rabbinic opinion is divided on the status of the resulting child. Most rabbis consider the offspring to be legitimate, but a small minority consider the child to be illegitimate. According to the opinion of a considerable number of rabbis, the child, whether legitimate or illegitimate, is the offspring of the donor in all respects (that is, inheritance, support, custody, incest, levirate marriage, and the like). Some rabbis state that, although the child is considered to be the donor's offspring in all respects, the donor has not fulfilled the commandment of procreation. A minority of Rabbinic authorities assert that the child is not considered the donor's offspring at all.

Rabbinic opinion is nearly unanimous that the husband's semen may be inserted artificially if there is no other way for the wife to become pregnant. However, certain qualifications exist. The couple must wait a reasonable period of time after their marriage until there is medical proof of the absolute necessity for artificial insemination by husband (AIH). According to many authorities, the insemination may not be performed during the wife's monthly period of ritual impurity. It is permitted to obtain

sperm from the husband both for analysis or insemination, but there is a difference of opinion about how to procure it. Masturbation should be avoided if at all possible; *coitus interruptus* or the use of a condom seem to be the preferred methods.

Note that many important legal and moral considerations that cannot be enunciated in the presentation of general principles may weigh heavily upon the verdict in any given situation. Therefore, it is advisable to submit each individual case to Rabbinic judgment, which, in turn, will be based upon expert medical advice and other prevailing circumstances.

New Reproductive Technologies

In 1978, Louise Brown, the world's first "test tube" baby was born as a result of in vitro fertilization (IVF), the process of mixing an egg with sperm in a laboratory dish to achieve fertilization, then transferring the early embryo to a woman's uterus with the hope that it will successfully implant and lead to the birth of a healthy child. In the case of Louise Brown, the sperm and egg used were from Mr. and Mrs. Brown. Often the embryo is implanted into the uterus of a woman other than the egg donor; the sperm may also be obtained from a man other than the husband. This technique is characterized by some as science at its best and by others as immoral meddling.

Surrogate parenting is not a technology but a social arrangement that uses reproductive technology (either artificial insemination or in vitro fertilization) to enable a woman to produce a child for another couple, who usually are unable to have a natural child by natural means. Surrogate parenting is characterized by the intention to separate the genetic and/or gestational aspects of childbearing from parental rights and responsibilities through an agreement to transfer the infant and all maternal rights at birth.[6]

One underlying theme in considering the legal issues and moral dilemmas posed by these new techniques is the motivation behind the actions of the concerned parties. At one extreme are the sperm donors and surrogate mothers who are often motivated by a desire for money. On the other end of the spectrum are the couples who have been trying unsuccessfully for years to have a child and who finally resort to one of these methods. Their motivation is pure and represents their burning desire to have a child. Many ethical and moral conflicts arise because the motivation of one party (the sperm donor or surrogate mother) is different from the motivation of the other (the husband and wife). Few ethical concerns are posed by the case of the husband and wife who resort to in vitro fertilization using their own egg and sperm, or that of the young woman with Hodgkin disease or other cancer who cryopreserves her eggs to be able to have children with her own spouse later. Such cases pose very few moral dilemmas other than those of the propriety or religious permissibility of artificial insemination and in vitro fertilization.

In Britain, a blue-ribbon committee headed by Dame Mary Warnock issued a report stating that sperm and egg donations and in vitro fertilization are acceptable techniques for treating infertility.[7] The committee took a pragmatic view of surrogate motherhood, based heavily on the fear of commercial exploitation, or "womb leasing." In response to both the Warnock committee report and the hostile mood of the British public towards commercial surrogacy, the British government passed the Surrogate Arrangements Act of 1985, which makes it a criminal offense to benefit from commercial surrogacy. Voluntary surrogacy, however, is still within the law.

In the United States, several state legislatures are considering laws to ban commercial surrogacy without making voluntary arrangements illegal. The American Medical Association, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, and the American Fertility Society, among others, have all issued guidelines about the proper use of these new reproductive technologies.[8]

From the Jewish viewpoint, is it tampering with life itself to perform in vitro fertilization? Is it interfering with the divine plan for humanity? If God's will is for a man and/or a woman to be infertile, who are we to undertake test-tube fertilization

and embryo reimplantation into the natural or genetic mother, or into a host or surrogate mother, to overcome the infertility problem? Judaism teaches that nature was created by God for humans to use to their advantage and benefit. Hence, animal experimentation is certainly permissible, provided one minimizes the pain or discomfort to the animal. The production of hormones (such as insulin) from bacteria, in tissue cultures, or in animals by recombinant DNA technology for people's benefit also seems permissible. Gene therapy, such as in the replacement of the missing or defective gene in Tay-Sachs disease or in hemophilia, if and when it becomes medically possible, may also be sanctioned in Jewish law. But are we permitted to alter humanity by such measures as in vitro fertilization, transfer of the embryo from a woman inseminated with her husband's (or a donor's) sperm into another woman's womb, artificial gestation in a test tube or glass womb, sex organ or gene transplants, or genetic screening and counseling?

The Committee on Medical Ethics of the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies of New York concluded that a fertilized egg not in the womb, but in an environment in which it can never attain viability (a test tube) does not have humanhood and may be discarded or used for the advancement of scientific knowledge.[9] It should be stressed that, even in the absence of Jewish legal or moral objections to in vitro fertilization using the husband's sperm, no woman is required to submit to this procedure. The obligations of women, whether by reason of the scriptural exhortation to populate the universe or by virtue of the marital contract, are limited to bearing children by means of natural intercourse.[10]

In summary, artificial insemination, in vitro fertilization, surrogate motherhood, and cryo-preservation of sperm, eggs, or fertilized zygotes for later use are strongly opposed by some rabbis on moral and ethical grounds and just as strongly justified by others. On the one hand, human procreation should not be converted into the "manufacture" of progeny. The intimate love joining husband and wife together should not be broken by the "biologization" of family life. On the other hand, in Judaism infertility is considered to be an illness—physiological, emotional or both—and the physician's duty and mandate is to heal illness and to overcome, if possible, somatic and emotional strains related to the illness. To help a couple to have their own child through the modern technologies of artificial insemination or in vitro fertilization seems to be within the physician's purview and might even strengthen the bonds of the marriage and the family structure. The use of host or surrogate mothers for the convenience of couples able to conceive by normal coitus cannot be condoned. However, an infertile Jewish couple may have recourse to the new reproductive technologies, including the use of a surrogate mother in the absence of alternatives, in order to effect pregnancy and by so doing preserve their marriage and bring themselves happiness.

Abortion

The Jewish legal and moral attitude toward abortion based on biblical, talmudic and Rabbinic sources including the *responsa* literature has been described in detail in English by Feldman,[11] Bleich,[12] Jakobovits,[13] and Rosner.[14] In Jewish law, an unborn fetus is not considered to be a person (Hebrew: *nefesh*, literally: soul) until it is born. The fetus is regarded as part of its mother's body and not a separate being until it begins to egress from the womb during parturition. Until forty days after conception, the fertilized egg is considered "mere fluid." Intentional abortion is not mentioned directly in the Bible, but a case of accidental abortion is discussed in Ex. 21:22–23, which states:

> When men fight and one of them pushes a pregnant woman and a miscarriage results, but no other misfortune ensues, the one responsible shall be fined as the woman's husband may exact from him, the payment to be based on judges' reckoning. But if other misfortune ensues, the penalty shall be life for life.

Most biblical commentators interpret "no other misfortune" to mean no fatal injury to the woman following her miscarriage. In that case, the attacker pays only financial

compensation for having unintentionally caused the miscarriage, no differently than if he had accidentally injured the woman elsewhere on her body. Thus, when the mother is otherwise unharmed following trauma to her abdomen that causes the fetus to be lost, the only concern is to have the one responsible pay damages to the woman and her husband for the loss of the fetus.

The major talmudic source for abortion rulings in Judaism discusses a case of danger to the mother (M. Oh. 7:6):

> If a woman is having difficulty in giving birth [and her life is in danger], one cuts up the fetus within her womb and extracts it limb by limb, because her life takes precedence over that of the fetus. But if the greater part was already born, one may not touch it, for one may not set aside one person's life [*nefesh*] for that of another.

The commentators explain that the fetus is not considered to be a *nefesh*, or person, until it has left the womb and entered the air of the world; one is, therefore, permitted to destroy it to save the mother's life. Once the head or greater part of the body of the infant comes out, the infant may not be harmed, because it is considered as fully born and, in Judaism, one may not sacrifice one life to save another.

There are many other talmudic sources which support the non-person status of the unborn fetus. In fact, during the first forty days of conception, the Talmud (B. Yeb. 69b, B. Nid. 30b, and M. Ker. 1:3) considers the fertilized zygote to be nothing more than "mere fluid." However, after forty days have elapsed, the fetus is deemed to have been fashioned or formed. Laws of ritual uncleanness must be observed for abortuses older than forty days, implying that the unborn fetus, although not considered to be a living person, still has considerable status. In fact, Jewish law allows one to desecrate the Sabbath to save the life or preserve the health of an unborn fetus so that "the child may observe many Sabbaths later."

The permissibility to kill the unborn fetus to save the mother's life rests upon the fact that such an embryo is not considered a person (*nefesh*) until it is born. Maimonides and Karo present another reason for allowing abortion or embryotomy prior to birth where the mother's life is endangered—the argument of "pursuit," which understands the fetus to be "pursuing" the mother. Maimonides (Mishneh Torah, *Hilchot Rotzeach* 1:9) states:

> if a pregnant woman is having difficulty in giving birth, the child inside her may be excised, either by drugs or manually [i.e., surgery], because it is regarded as pursuing her in order to kill her. But if its head has been born, it must not be touched, for one may not set aside one human life for that of another, and this happening is the course of nature [i.e., an act of God: the mother is pursued by heaven, not the fetus].

An identical statement is found in Karo's Code (Shulchan Aruch, *Choshen Mishpat* 425:2). Many Rabbinic authorities ask, How can the argument of pursuit be invoked here? Since the child does not intend to kill the mother, it appears to be a case of heavenly pursuit.

One answer is offered by Feinstein[15] and others who state that it is unclear whether the fetus is "pursuing" the mother or vice versa since it is an "act of God." Therefore, because the mother is a person and the fetus is not, it is permissible to sacrifice the fetus to save the mother's life. Once the baby is born, both mother and child are persons, and one may not touch the newborn because one may not sacrifice one life to save another.

If an unborn child is not considered a person or *nefesh*, why should its destruction not be allowed under all circumstances? Why is only a threat to the mother's life or health an acceptable reason for therapeutic abortion? Many reasons are offered. First, interference with pregnancy would constitute expulsion of semen for naught, an act akin to *coitus interruptus* and strictly prohibited in Jewish law. Second, the unborn fetus, although not a person, would have sufficient status, if it were aborted after forty days of conception, to require its mother to undergo the same ritual purification process required if she had given birth to a live child. The same process is also prescribed for a woman who has a spontaneous miscarriage. Thus, the fetus can be considered to be a "partial person."

Third, one is not permitted to wound one-self. A woman undergoing abortion by manipulative means is considered to be intentionally wounding herself. Fourth, abortion entails some danger, and Jewish law prohibits intentionally placing oneself in danger. Fifth, many rabbis prohibit abortion when there is no threat to the mother, because they deem such termination of pregnancy an appurtenance of murder and so morally forbidden. The unborn fetus is a potential person that, without interference, will be born and achieve the status of a person. The final and perhaps most important consideration in prohibiting abortion on demand in Jewish law is the fact that the Talmud permits abortion only when the mother's life is endangered. The implication is that when the mother's life is not at stake, it is prohibited to destroy the unborn fetus.

In summary, most Rabbinic authorities would prohibit therapeutic abortion in cases such as the mother's exposure to German measles or to thalidomide early in pregnancy, because there are no fetal indications for abortion in Judaism (for more extensive discussion, see below). By contrast, most rabbis permit and even mandate abortion when the health or life of the mother is threatened. Some authorities are stringent and require the mother's life to be in mortal danger, however remote that danger, whereas others permit abortion for a less serious threat to the mother's health. Such dangers to maternal health may include deafness, cancer, pain, or psychiatric illness. The psychiatric indication for abortion must be certified by competent medical opinion or by previous experiences of mental illness in the mother, such as a postpartum nervous breakdown. Additionally, if the mother becomes pregnant while nursing a child and the pregnancy changes her milk, thereby endangering the suckling's life, abortion is permitted.

A new moral and legal issue relates to a woman pregnant with multiple fetuses either naturally or as a result of hormonal treatment or following in vitro fertilization and implantation of multiple embryos. The mother of multiple fetuses is subject to a very high rate of complications in pregnancy, and there is also a high rate of fetal morbidity and mortality. One option is to selectively abort one or more fetuses so that the others remaining have a better chance of surviving.

In Judaism, abortion of one or more fetuses is never allowed for the sake of the fetus. Abortion is permissible and even mandated only where the pregnancy, simple or multiple, poses a serious danger to the mother's physical or mental health or constitutes a threat to her life. Because multiple pregnancies are associated with a high rate of serious maternal complications, such as preeclampsia, eclampsia, bleeding, uterine atony, and urinary tract infections, it might be permissible to destroy one or more fetuses in a multiple gestation situation to reduce or eliminate these serious risks to the mother.

Tay-Sachs Screening and Abortion

Debate continues about screening large numbers of Jewish people for the carrier state of Tay-Sachs disease and performing amniocentesis for the prenatal detection of the fatal disease. With rare exceptions, the authors of articles, pamphlets, and booklets relating to Tay-Sachs disease recommend abortion if the amniocentesis reveals an affected child. To eliminate Tay-Sachs disease by selectively terminating affected pregnancies may not be acceptable in Judaism, although some rabbis do sanction such procedures. Although local support for Tay-Sachs screening programs may be active, such support is usually limited to detecting the carrier state and does not include performing amniocentesis with the sole intention of aborting the fetus if it is found to have Tay-Sachs disease.

There are reasons to think twice before undertaking mass screening programs. What are the psychological problems created by discovering that one is a carrier for a fatal genetic disease? Should a known carrier refuse to marry a mate who has not been tested? Should partners break up an engagement or a marriage when they learn through a screening program that they are both carriers? Should a young person inquire about

the Tay-Sachs status of a member of the opposite sex prior to meeting that individual socially? When should a person who knows that he or she is a carrier inform an intended spouse? Should we sacrifice primary prevention of Tay-Sachs disease through mate selection to avoid the psycho-social consequences? Is this method of disease prevention an attractive aspect of genetic screening for carriers?

One must remember that twenty-nine of thirty Jews tested for the carrier state are found to be free of the Tay-Sachs gene. It is certainly desirable for these twenty-nine to have peace of mind. However, is the anxiety of the thirtieth person on learning that he or she is a carrier sufficiently great to warrant not testing at all? Obviously not! But one cannot minimize the possible psycho-social trauma to such an individual.

The social stigma of being a carrier of the Tay-Sachs gene is not fully appreciated. Misinformed or uninformed people may look at carriers in the same way that, half a century ago, people looked at patients with epilepsy and leprosy: as individuals afflicted with a "taboo" disease who should be shunned and ostracized from normal social contact. Discrimination against carriers of Tay-Sachs disease may also occur in a variety of areas, if the experience of sickle-cell screening is repeated. Individuals found to have sickle-cell trait were dismissed from their jobs. Several life insurance companies charged higher premiums for individuals with sickle-cell trait or refused to insure them at all. Is this fate also to be suffered by people who, on screening, are found to be carriers of the Tay-Sachs gene? Total confidentiality in screening might avoid such problems and should be an essential part of all such programs.

If Tay-Sachs screening intends to assure that those who need it will receive genetic counseling about reproductive and mating options, few will argue against screening. If the purpose, however, is to suggest to couples at risk the benefits of prenatal diagnosis by amniocentesis, a procedure that may be contrary to the religious dictates of the client, then screening should not be performed. There is little doubt that screening for hypertension, diabetes, and other common conditions that, although not curable, can be controlled by medical therapy, is highly desirable and should be done. There is less certainty that the benefits of Tay-Sachs screening outweigh the disadvantages, although we can give a qualified affirmative answer to this question. But it is clear that those who plan or conduct any screening program must consider the religious teachings of the Jewish people if they want to have the cooperation of the rabbinate and compliance from the clients.

If amniocentesis reveals a fetus affected with Tay-Sachs disease, is abortion permissible in Jewish law? Rabbi Moshe Feinstein condemns abortion for Tay-Sachs disease because abortion is not allowed for the sake of the fetus.[16] On the other hand, Rabbi Eliezer Yehudah Waldenberg allows termination of pregnancy for Tay-Sachs disease because "the defect, the anguish, the shame, the physical and mental pain and suffering of the parents are inestimable."[17] Hence, abortion would be sanctioned by most rabbis to preserve the mother's sanity. Moreover, if a woman who suffered a nervous breakdown following the birth (or death) of a child with Tay-Sachs disease becomes pregnant again, and is so distraught with the knowledge that she may be carrying another child with the fatal disease that she threatens suicide, Jewish law would allow amniocentesis. If this procedure reveals an unaffected fetus, the pregnancy will continue to term. If the amniocentesis indicates a homozygous fetus with Tay-Sachs disease, the couple should consult a rabbi about whether or not an abortion should be performed.

Death and Dying

Because of advances in medical technology, some people who in an earlier era would have died are today alive and well. Others who would have died are now alive but in a coma or a chronic vegetative state. Medical technology has created as many problems as it has solved. The new technology denies the physician a simple physiological end point for life. The result is a series of difficult questions to be faced by the patient, physician, and family:

> When is a person dead so that his organs can be removed for organ transplantation? Dare we remove kidneys from a donor whose heart is still beating? Is it cruel in the presence of a fatal disease, in the agonal hours, to prolong life (or dying) by the use of life-support machines? What should be done and what should not be done for a terminally ill patient? Should an eighty-year-old man with terminal prostatic cancer be treated differently from a child with leukemia? Who is to weigh the value of a few more days of life? Who is to decide—the physician? the patient? the family?—when the end should come? Should the patient have the option to choose a peaceful death without exposure to the seemingly relentless application of medical technology? Should the physician discuss this option with the patient? To what extent does any individual own his own death? Does a person have the right to select how and when to die? Is such a decision by the patient akin to suicide? What is an individual's responsibility to personal life and health?

Judaism's response to questions such as these emerges from its understanding that life is a gift of God to be held in trust. One is duty bound to care for one's life and health. Only God gives life and, hence, only God can take it away. This individual responsibility for the preservation of life and health is apart from the duty of one person (including a physician) toward another's life and health, and society's responsibility concerning the life and health of its citizens. Specific responses of Judaism to central areas of concern follow.

Euthanasia

Jewish teaching on mercy killing is based on the principle of the infinite value of human life. Since even a second of life has value, one is obligated to provide all necessary care even to patients who have only a few moments of life left. One is prohibited from doing anything that hastens death.

The Talmud clearly enunciates Judaism's objection to euthanasia when it states that a dying patient (Hebrew: *gosses*) is regarded as a living person in all respects (Semachot 1:1ff. and B. Shab. 151b). All acts performed on the dead to delay putrefaction of the body and to prepare it for burial—such as binding the jaws, stopping up the openings, rubbing, washing or placing sand or salt on the body—are prohibited on a moribund patient, "lest they hasten the death of the patient by even a few moments." This rule is codified by Maimonides (Mishneh Torah, *Hilchot Avel* 4:5), Karo (Shulchan Aruch, *Yoreh Deah* #339) and others. He who unnecessarily touches the eyes of a dying patient when the soul is about to depart is shedding blood. The situation is compared to a flickering flame which is extinguished as soon as one touches it. On the other hand, Rabbi Moshe Isserles, known as *Ramah*, states (gloss Shulchan Aruch, *Yoreh Deah* #339:1):

> If there is anything that causes a hindrance to the departure of the soul such as the presence near the patient's house of a knocking noise such as wood chopping or if there is salt on the patient's tongue; and these hinder the soul's departure, then it is permissible to remove them from there because there is no act involved in this at all but only the removal of the impediment.

From these and other sources, Jakobovits[18] and other rabbis conclude that any form of active euthanasia is strictly prohibited and condemned as plain murder. Anyone who kills a dying person is liable to the death penalty as a common murderer. At the same time, Jewish law sanctions the withdrawal of any factor—whether extraneous to the patient or not—that may artificially delay the patient's demise in the final phase. Jakobovits is quick to point out, however, that all the Jewish sources refer to a *gosses* in whom death is expected to be imminent—three days or less in Rabbinic references. Thus, passive euthanasia for a patient who may yet live for weeks or months may not necessarily be condoned. Furthermore, in the case of an incurably ill person in severe pain, agony, or distress, the removal of an impediment that hinders the soul's departure, although permitted in Jewish law, may not be analogous to withholding the medical therapy that is perhaps sustaining the patient's life, albeit unnaturally. The impediments spoken of in Jewish law, whether far removed from the patient (as exemplified by the noise of wood chopping) or in physical contact with him (such as salt on the patient's tongue), do not constitute any part

of the therapeutic methods and equipment employed in the medical management of this patient. For this reason, these impediments may be removed. However, it may be permissible to discontinue the use of instruments and machinery specifically designed and used in the treatment of incurably ill patients when one is certain that in doing so one is shortening the act of dying and not interrupting life.

Treatment of the Terminally Ill

The most extensive discussion in the recent literature of the treatment of the terminally ill is that by Rabbi Moshe Feinstein, who states that physicians are not obligated to administer special medical therapy to prolong a life of pain and suffering of a patient who cannot be cured and cannot live much longer; nature may be allowed to take its course.[19] While it is prohibited to administer any medication or do any act to hasten the patient's death by even a moment, pain-relief medications should be administered even if the patient is not yet considered a *gosses* in whom death is imminent, even at the risk of depressing the patient's respiratory center and hastening his death. This is provided that the medications are prescribed solely for pain relief and not to hasten death. Rabbi Eliezer Waldenberg also supports this view and reiterates that physicians are obligated to do everything possible to save the life of a dying patient, even if the patient will live only for a brief period, and even if the patient is suffering.[20] Any action that results in hastening the death of a dying patient is forbidden and considered an act of murder.

Feinstein also asserts that a seriously ill patient with respiratory difficulties should be given oxygen even if he cannot be cured, because oxygen relieves discomfort. There are times, continues Feinstein, when it is appropriate to pray for the death of a suffering, dying patient. Still, one must in no way hasten the patient's death, such that, for instance, care must even be exercised not to touch a dying patient unnecessarily. When a patient is suffering from advanced cancer and cannot be cured, and medications can only prolong the painful suffering, the patient should be so informed and asked if he or she wishes to receive such medications. They do not need to be administered to a person who refuses them, because life would be prolonged only for suffering. One is not obligated or even permitted to initiate artificial life support or other resuscitative efforts if it is obvious that the patient is terminally, irreversibly ill with no chance of recovery. This position is clearly supported by Isserles, who permits and even requires the withdrawal of any impediment to the departure of the soul. On the other hand, if the treatment has a reasonable chance of producing a remission of the illness and prolonging the patient's life, the patient is obligated to accept such treatment.

Feinstein also rules that if a patient with an incurable illness, such as metastatic cancer, develops an intercurrent illness that is treatable and often completely reversible, such as pneumonia or a urinary tract infection, it is obligatory to treat the intercurrent illness.[21] If the underlying incurable illness is very painful and the patient refuses additional palliative therapy, however, it is not obligatory to administer medications that will only prolong a life of suffering without any hope of cure. Even if the patient is unable to voice an opinion in this matter, one can consult with immediate family members about what the patient would have desired had he or she been able to express a preference. Such decisions should be made in consultation with a competent rabbi and the most expert physicians.

Specifically addressing the giving of food and fluids by nasogastric tube or intravenous route, Feinstein states:

> . . . it is clear that an incurably ill patient who cannot eat normally must be fed intravenously since such feeding strengthens the patient somewhat even if the patient does not feel anything [i.e., is comatose]. Food is not at all comparable to medication since food is a natural substance which all living creatures require to maintain life.

Many other modern Rabbinic authorities support the view that a dying patient must be given food, fluids, oxygen, antibiotics, and pain relief drugs. Every moment of life is precious, and all measures must be taken

to preserve even a few moments of life. When a patient's situation is deemed by physicians to be hopeless, however, one is not obligated to institute life-prolonging or resuscitative treatments.

In summary, Jewish law requires the physician to do everything in his power to prolong life but prohibits the use of measures that prolong the act of dying. Euthanasia accordingly is opposed without qualification in Jewish law, which condemns as sheer murder any active or deliberate hastening of death, done with or without the patient's consent. Some Rabbinic views do not allow any relaxation of efforts, however artificial and ultimately hopeless they are, to prolong life. Others, however, do not require the physician to resort to "heroic" methods, but sanction the omission of machines and artificial life-support systems that only serve to draw out the dying patient's agony, provided, however, that basic care (such as food and good nursing) is provided.

Jewish teaching proclaims the sanctity of human life. The physician is given divine license to heal but not to hasten death. When a physician has nothing further to offer a patient medically or surgically, the physician's license to heal ends and he or she becomes no different from a lay person, morally obligated to help another human in distress. A dying patient is no exception to this obligation. The physician, family, friends, nurses, social workers, and other individuals close to the dying patient are all obligated to provide supportive—including psycho-social and emotional—care until the very end. Fluids and nutrition are part and parcel of that supportive care, no different from washing, turning, talking to, singing with, reading to, or just listening to the dying patient. There are times when specific medical and/or surgical therapy are no longer indicated, appropriate or desirable for an irreversibly ill, dying patient. However, under no circumstances can general supportive measures be abandoned, to hasten the patient's demise.

Because the decisions about withholding specific therapy for a terminally ill patient; discontinuing life-support systems; employing resuscitative measures in a given situation; and withholding or withdrawing fluids, nutrition, and oxygen are complex and not free of the personal and emotional involvement and biases of family members and physicians, it is advisable to consult with a competent rabbi on a case-by-case basis.

The Living Will

The living will is a legal document that recognizes the right of an adult to instruct a physician to withhold life-sustaining procedures in the event of the person's inability to do so while in a terminal condition. The living will is designed to promote the patient's autonomy while removing the obligation of the physician and the patient's family to make onerous decisions. Experience with the living will indicates that it can either help or hinder clinical decision making. Jewish law, for its part, is opposed to the concept of the living will because it holds that the patient does not have the right to die. A person, rather, has an obligation to live. Only God gives and takes life. Humans do not have full title over their life or body. They are charged with preserving, dignifying, and hallowing that life.

A central problem with the living will emerges from the fact that it is extremely difficult to make accurate predictions for critically ill patients and to determine whether a patient is irreversibly ill and whether death is imminent. The provisions of the living will sometimes can be activated prematurely. Alternatively, the existence of a living will may deprive the patient of the full efforts of the medical team, who might not use the usual vigor and aggressive approach dictated by the patient's condition.

Other problems also occur. If a patient changes his or her mind while a living will is in effect but fails to formally rescind the declaration, it may be activated without proper "informed consent." Additionally, patients often write living wills to avoid having to live with intractable pain; however, should the time arrive that a patient is in intractable pain, medical science may have developed methods to deal with his pain. A patient who signs a living will thus thinks that he is opting for a painless, conscious, dignified, decent, comfortable, peaceful, and

natural death. In fact, what the patient perceives as the "right to die" may backfire. The living will only protects the right to refuse treatment; it does not guarantee a peaceful, easy death.

Definition of Death

The classic definition of death in Jewish law is the irreversible absence of spontaneous respiration.[22] Some rabbis also require complete cessation of cardiac activity. One must use all available medical means to ascertain with certainty that respiratory and cardiac functions have indeed irreversibly ceased.

Rabbi Moshe Tendler introduced the concept of physiologic decapitation or whole brain including brain stem death in Judaism as an acceptable definition of death even if cardiac function has not ceased.[23] Thus, if it can be definitely demonstrated that all of a patient's brain functions, including brain stem function, have ceased, the patient is legally dead in Jewish law, because he is equated with a decapitated individual whose heart may still be beating. Brain stem function can be accurately evaluated by a variety of neurological tests, including the "apnea test" and other simple, safe, highly specific and highly reliable indicators of absence of blood flow to the entire brain to confirm total irreversible brain death. According to Tendler, Rabbi Moshe Feinstein,[24] whose *responsum* on heart transplantation begins with a discussion of decapitation, supports the aforementioned position that complete and permanent absence of any brain-related vital bodily function is recognized as death in Jewish law.

In a more recent *responsum*, Rabbi Feinstein further supports the acceptability of total irreversible whole brain death as an absolute definition of death.[25] Feinstein again reiterates the classic definition of death as the total irreversible cessation of respiration. He then states that, if by injecting a substance into the vein of a patient, physicians can ascertain that there is no circulation to the brain—meaning no connection between the brain and the rest of the body—the patient is legally dead in Judaism because he is equivalent to a decapitated person. Where the test is available, continues Feinstein, it should be used.

The classic respiratory and circulatory death is in reality brain death. Irreversible respiratory arrest is indicative of brain death. A brain dead person is like a physiologically decapitated individual. The requirement of Maimonides to "wait awhile" to confirm that the patient is dead is that amount of time it takes after the heart and lungs stop until the brain dies, that is to say, a few minutes.

In summary, all rabbis agree that the classic definition of death in Judaism is the irreversible absence of spontaneous respiration and heartbeat in a patient with no bodily motion. According to this definition, death may be pronounced following a brief waiting period after breathing has ceased. In the present era, when it is recognized that hypothermia or drug overdose can result in depression of the respiratory center with absence of spontaneous respiration and even heartbeat, this classic definition of death is insufficient. Hence, wherever resuscitation is deemed possible, no matter how remote the chance, it must be attempted. Some Rabbinic scholars do not accept total brain death as a criterion for establishing death, other than to confirm death in a patient who already has irreversible absence of spontaneous respiration and no heartbeat. The only exception may be the situation of decapitation, in which immediate death is assumed, even if the heart may still be briefly beating. Whether or not irreversible whole brain including brain stem death, as evidenced by sophisticated medical testing, is the Jewish legal equivalent of decapitation, is presently a matter of intense debate in Rabbinic circles.

Autopsy

Since Judaism teaches that man is created in the image of God, every dignity must be extended to the human body in death as in life. For this reason the body must be regarded as inviolate and, except in certain limited circumstances, Jewish law does not sanction the performance of autopsies. The consensus of Rabbinic opinion, however,

holds that postmortem examinations may and sometimes must be performed for the purpose of gaining specific information of immediate benefit in the treatment of other patients already afflicted by a life-threatening disease. A case in point would be a person with cancer who died after receiving an experimental drug or drug combination. Postmortem examination to ascertain possible toxicity in order to prevent potential harm to other patients on the same course of treatment, or to obtain information concerning the therapeutic efficacy of the drug or drug combination, would be warranted according to Jewish law when such information is deemed to be essential in the treatment of other patients already suffering from the same illness.

Another situation in which autopsy is not only allowed but probably mandated involves life-threatening infectious disease such as Legionnaires' disease. At a convention in Philadelphia in 1976, several hundred Legionnaires were afflicted with a pneumonia-like illness, and many died. Jewish law would probably dictate autopsy on those who died in order to discover the offending organism (now known) and treatment (now available) so as to save the lives of the other patients afflicted, many of whom were dying of the same illness.

The dominant consideration in permitting an autopsy is the immediacy of the constructive application of the findings. This "here and now" principle, once limited to the medical needs of a local community, can now be extended through the excellence of communication and scientific reporting to the whole medical world. Results of autopsies in New York can be available in London in a matter of minutes. Routine autopsies cannot be sanctioned, however, although great benefit may accrue at some distant future time.

Another area where autopsy is permissible in Jewish law is genetic disease. A postmortem examination may be performed on a child who dies of a fatal genetic disease in order to obtain information that might save the lives of future children in that family who may be afflicted with the same disease. Although the baby whose life is to be saved has not yet been born or even conceived, the "here and now" principle is rabbinically satisfied in the case of lethal genetic diseases.

When an autopsy is sanctioned in Jewish law, certain considerations must be observed. The autopsy should be done as a surgical procedure with the deceased given the same dignity, respect, and consideration that would be accorded a living patient undergoing an operation. It should be performed in dignified surroundings. The deceased should be draped and only the area of incision exposed. Proper decorum should be observed, and the behavior of the surgical-pathological staff should be appropriate to the situation. In a typical autopsy, an incision is made along the entire length of the abdominal and thoracic cavities, and internal organs, including the brain, are examined. Such a complete autopsy is not countenanced when—as is often the case—all pertinent potentially life-saving information may be acquired by means of a much more limited incision and examination of only those organs or areas crucial for obtaining this information. For example, in Legionnaires' disease, a postmortem examination limited to the chest would have provided the necessary information about the cause and cure of this disease for the purpose of immediately saving the lives of afflicted patients. Finally, organs may not be removed if they can be examined *in situ*. All organs and body fluids must be returned for burial.

A special autopsy consent form has been prepared by the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies of New York in consultation with a number of physicians and legal scholars. It is designed to provide for detailed specification of the nature and scope of the postmortem examination for which permission is sought. This consent form requires the physician to state in precise clinical terms the information sought and to specify the area to be incised and the organs to be examined to obtain such information. The authorization signed by the next of kin limits the extent of the postmortem procedure to that which is absolutely necessary in order to secure pertinent, potentially life-saving information of immediate applicability. Use of the consent form morally and legally obligates the pathologist to respect

the directives of the next of kin. It specifies the limitations placed upon the autopsy procedure and ensures that all organs, tissues, and fluids will be returned for burial as required by Jewish law.[26]

Embalming and Cremation

The Medical Ethics Committee of the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies of New York, in its *Compendium on Medical Ethics*, summarizes the Jewish view of procedures after death:

> The inviolate right of a person to life, which differentiates mankind from all other animal species, extends an aura of holiness over the body even after the Divine soul leaves it. The body, like the soul, is the property of the One who created it. It is therefore not permitted to injure or mutilate the body except when overriding consideration for the preservation of life and health make such action necessary. . . . Reverent treatment of the body and speedy interment are biblically-ordained precepts. Cremation, freeze-storage of the body, and above-ground burial crypts, are all in violation of Jewish law and practice. The duty to bury in the ground applies to all parts of the body and is the obligation of the next of kin. Even where testamentary direction to be cremated has been given, Jewish law requires that it be ignored as an unwarranted desecration of the body.[27]

For a more detailed discussion of embalming and cremation in the classic Jewish sources and recent Rabbinic writings, the reader is referred elsewhere.[28]

Suicide

Judaism regards suicide as a criminal act and strictly forbidden by Jewish law. The cases of suicide in the Bible as well as those in the Apocrypha, Talmud, and Midrash took placed under unusual and extenuating conditions.

In general a suicide is not accorded full burial honors. The Talmud and codes of Jewish law decree that rending one's garments, delivering memorial addresses, and other rites of mourning that are an honor for the dead are not to be performed for a suicide. The strict definition of a suicide for which these laws apply is only one who had previously announced the intention and then killed himself immediately thereafter by the announced method. Children are never regarded as deliberate suicides and are afforded all burial rites. Similarly, those who commit suicide under extreme physical or mental strain, or while not in full possession of their faculties, or in order to atone for past sins are not considered as willful suicides, and none of the burial and mourning rites are withheld.

These considerations may condone the numerous acts of suicide and martyrdom committed by Jews throughout the centuries, from the priests who leaped into the flames of the burning Jerusalem-Temple to the martyred Jews in the time of the Crusades, from the Jewish suicides during the medieval persecutions to the martyred Jews in more recent pogroms. Only for the sanctification of the name of the Lord would a Jew intentionally take his or her own life or allow it to be taken as a symbol of extreme faith in God. Otherwise intentional suicide would be strictly forbidden, because it constitutes a denial of the Divine creation of man, of the immortality of the soul, and of the atonement of death.[29]

Other Medical Ethical Issues—Organ Transplantation

The Jewish and legal moral issues concerning the transplantation of a human organ can be conveniently subdivided into those which pertain to the recipient, those that involve the physician or medical team, and those that primarily affect the donor.

In regard to the recipient, does the transplanted organ become a permanent part of the recipient, or must it be returned to the donor upon the eventual death of the recipient? The donor may long since have been buried, and his identity and/or burial site may not be known. Furthermore, where a diseased organ such as a heart, liver, or lung is removed before implantation of a new organ, what does one do with the "old" or diseased organ? Can one just discard it? Must it be buried? Can one incinerate it

or place it in formalin for preservation? Must it be treated with respect as part of a human being who was created in the image of God? This problem is not unique to organ transplantation but applies to any organ or part removed from a living human being. Thus, the rabbis discuss whether or not a gallbladder, stomach, uterus, appendix, foot, leg, or other diseased organ or limb removed at surgery or traumatically avulsed requires burial. An entire chapter in Rabbi Joseph Karo's *Code of Jewish Law* is devoted to this question (*Yoreh Deah* 374).

Another question concerns whether or not the recipient is allowed to subject himself to the danger of the operative procedure. In Judaism, it is not proper intentionally to wound oneself for no valid medical reason.[30] Does this rule apply to surgery in general and to an organ transplant in particular? Furthermore, does the recipient transgress the biblical commandments "Only take heed, and keep your soul diligently" and "Therefore take good heed to yourselves" (Deut. 4:9 and 4:15), which both the Talmud and Maimonides interpret to mean the removal (i.e., avoidance) of all danger to one's physical well-being (B. Ber. 32b; Mishneh Torah, *Hilchot Rotzeach* 11:4)?

Another Jewish legal issue concerns a recipient who is a priest (Kohen), who is commanded not to become ritually defiled by corpse contact (Lev. 21:1–3). Does this question of ritual defilement[31] apply to an organ from a dead donor, which is now to be implanted into a priest? Finally, what are the Jewish priorities, if any, for choosing a recipient in view of the shortage of organ donors? Such priorities are enumerated in the Talmud (B. Hor. 13a, 13b, and 14a). Do they apply to organ transplant recipients, or should medical criteria be used exclusively in the selection of recipients?

In regard to the physician or medical team performing the organ transplant there are two major issues. Does an organ transplant constitute standard medical therapy or human experimentation but with therapeutic intent? Corneal and kidney transplants can be considered to be standard medical therapy, whereas lung and liver transplants should still be viewed as experimental. Physicians are obliged to heal the sick using all standard therapies available. Human experimentation is permissible in Jewish law under specific restricted conditions.[32] The more difficult issue is the establishment of criteria for determining whether a prospective donor is dead, for if the donor is still alive when the physician performing an organ transplantation removed one or more of his organs, the physician would be guilty of murder. The definition of death in Jewish law is discussed above. In relation to heart transplantation, the question of "killing" the recipient is also raised by several rabbis. When the recipient's diseased heart is removed prior to the implantation of a new heart, the patient is without a heart. Is the patient equivalent to a corpse (*nevelah*) or a non-viable person (*terefah*)? If so, are the physicians guilty of murder? Obviously not!

There are numerous Jewish legal questions concerning the organ donor: First is the establishment of the death of the donor before any organ is removed for transplantation. Second, there is the biblical prohibition of desecrating or mutilating the dead (B. Ar. 7a, B. Hul. 11b, and B. B.B. 154b). How can one remove an organ for transplantation without desecrating the body? There is also a biblical prohibition against deriving benefit from the dead.[33] The recipient of an organ from a deceased person certainly derives benefit from the dead! Furthermore, there is a biblical prohibition against delaying the burial of the dead[34] as well as the positive commandment of burying the dead.[35] Another halakhic consideration is that of ritual defilement for priests in the same room with either the donor or only the donor's organ or organs.[36] Do such organs transmit ritual defilement? Finally, in Jewish law is permission necessary either from the deceased prior to his demise or from the next of kin? Is one "robbing the dead" if one fails to obtain consent? Does the deceased have total rights over his or her body, or does it belong to God, who gave it on loan for the duration of life?

The answer to all these questions is based on the fact that a person dying of organ failure is classified as dangerously ill, and saving such a person (*pikuach nefesh*) takes precedence over all biblical and Rabbinic

commandments except murder, idolatry, and forbidden sexual relations. Even restoring sight to a blind person is classified as *pikuach nefesh*, since the blind individual may fall down a flight of stairs or be hit by a bus when crossing the street.[37] Thus, all organ transplants are permissible and even mandatory, provided the donor is deceased when donor organs are removed for transplantation. Live donors can be used for kidney and bone marrow transplantation because the risk to the donor is very small. In this regard Ezekiel's prophecy of God's promise is poignant: "And a new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stone heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh" (Ez. 11:19 and 36:26). Although this scriptural reference is obviously meant in a figurative and spiritual sense, it seems vividly to depict the epoch of cardiac and other organ transplantation.

Animal Experimentation

Jewish law not only forbids cruelty to animals but requires that we be kind to them, have compassion for them, and treat them humanely. Thus, if one sees an animal collapsing under a heavy burden, one must unload it. One may not muzzle an animal to deprive it of food while it is working. In fact, one may not partake of any food until one has first assured the provision of food for one's animals. That animals may not work on the Sabbath is a rule enunciated among the Ten Commandments, indicating that care of and kindness to animals are of profound importance for the humanizing of man.

These and other biblical and Rabbinic moral and legal rules concerning the treatment of animals are based on the principle that animals are part of God's creation for which man bears responsibility. Maimonides offers an insight into these rules in stating that the prohibition of causing suffering to animals was set down with a view to perfecting humans so that we do not acquire moral habits of cruelty. We should not inflict pain gratuitously without any utility but should be kind and merciful even with a chance or stray animal. We are forbidden to eat a limb cut off from a living animal because this act would make us acquire the habit of cruelty. The same reason is given for the rule forbidding the slaughtering of an animal and its young on the same day and the commandment to release the mother bird before taking the young.[38]

There are many additional rules the rabbis enacted to guard animals against hunger, overwork, disease, distress, and suffering. Wanton hunting and killing of animals for sport is prohibited. It is forbidden to inflict a blemish on an animal. Numerous Sabbath laws relating to forbidden acts are waived when such acts are intended to relieve pain of an animal. People are not permitted to buy animals unless they can properly care and provide for them.

On the other hand, Judaism also espouses the concept that everything God created in this world was created to serve mankind. Animals may thus be used as beasts of burden and for food, providing they are humanely slaughtered. Scientific experiments upon laboratory animals during the course of medical research designed to yield information that might lead to cure of disease are sanctioned by Jewish law as legitimate utilization of animals for the benefit of mankind. However, wherever possible, pain or discomfort should be eliminated or minimized by analgesia, anesthesia, or other means. The pain does not serve to satisfy a legitimate human need and its infliction is prohibited. In addition, animal experimentation is only permissible by Jewish law if its purpose is to obtain practical benefits to mankind and not simply the satisfaction of intellectual curiosity. Furthermore, if alternative means of obtaining the same information are available, such as tissue culture studies, animal experimentation might be considered to fall under the category of unnecessary cruelty to animals and be prohibited.

Alternative Therapies

More and more patients are seeking alternative therapies or more natural forms of therapy such as naturopathy, acupuncture, chiropractic, herbal remedies, and vitamin

and mineral therapies. Contrary to stereotypes, patients who seek unproven methods tend to be well-educated, upper middle class, and not necessarily terminal or even beyond hope of cure or remission by conventional treatments. Many practitioners of unorthodox cancer care are licensed physicians who specialize in homeopathic or naturopathic medicine.

Why do people seek out alternative therapies? They may be discouraged and despair about the realities of conventional cancer treatment. Fear, side-effects, previous negative experiences, and a desire by the patient for more supportive care are other reasons. People are unhappy with the disease oriented technologic, authoritarian health care system. They may reject conventional care, because they are attracted to the ideology which includes an emphasis on self-care.

Since Judaism considers a human life to have infinite value, physicians and other health-care givers are obligated to heal the sick and prolong life. Physicians are not only given divine license to practice medicine, but are also mandated to use their skills to heal the sick. Failure or refusal to do so, with resultant negative impact on the patient, constitutes a transgression on the part of the physician. Physicians must be well-trained in traditional medicine and licensed by the authorities. Patients similarly are duty bound to seek healing from a physician when they are ill and not to rely solely on divine intervention or faith healing. Patients are charged with preserving their health and restoring it when ailing in order to be able to serve the Lord in a state of good health. Quackery is not condoned in Judaism whether or not it is practiced by physicians. Those who deceive patients into accepting quack remedies "are destined for Gehenna" (B. Qid. 4:14).

On the other hand, Judaism seems to sanction certain alternative therapies, such as prayers, faith healing, amulets, incantations, and the like, when used as a supplement to traditional medical therapy. Only the substitution of prayer for rational healing is condemned. Quackery, superstition, sorcery, and witchcraft are abhorrent practices in Judaism, but confidence in the healing powers of God through prayer and contrition is encouraged and has its place of honor alongside traditional scientific medicine.[39]

Rationing and Priorities in Judaism

Health care reform is being driven in part to control costs. Organ transplantation, hemodialysis, sophisticated cardiac and other surgery, in vitro fertilization and other reproductive technologies, magnetic resonance imaging and other advanced diagnostic tools are all very costly. The care of small premature babies, patients with AIDS, and the elderly with chronic physical or mental disabilities is extremely expensive. We can no longer afford to pay for everything for everybody. Despite the varied and extensive health technology available nowadays, including a multitude of diagnostic and therapeutic modalities, not all needs can be met.

The classic talmudic source which discusses priorities (i.e., rationing) teaches that a man takes precedence over a woman in matters concerning the saving of life because he has more commandments to fulfill (M. Hor. 3:7). A woman takes precedence over a man in respect of clothing, because her shame is greater if she must wear shabby clothing. A woman also takes precedence over a man in ransoming them from captivity, because she may be raped by her captors. If a man and his father and his teacher were kidnapped, his ransom takes precedence over his teacher, and his teacher takes precedence over his father, while his mother takes precedence over all of them. A scholar takes precedence over a king of Israel, for if a scholar dies there is none to replace him, while all Israel are eligible for kingship. A king takes precedence over a High Priest, and a High Priest takes precedence over a prophet (B. Hor. 13a).

It seems from this talmudic discussion that Judaism considers religious status, personal dignity, social worth, and even inherited station in life as factors that determine priorities and precedences in the allocation of ransom money or other scarce resources. Yet such an approach is in direct contrast to the cardinal Jewish principle that one may not sacrifice one human life to save another (B. San. 72b; M. Oh. 7:6, etc.).

The reason, as cited in the Talmud, is because one person's blood is no redder than the blood of another (B. Pes. 25b), indicating that all lives are of equal value. The infinite value of human life, that is, disallows the sacrificing of one life to save another since all lives are of equal value. This rule implies that no qualitative distinctions should be made between people. Yet, the Talmud cited above lists orders of precedence based on social worth, religious status and personal dignity!

How, then, does Judaism approach the problem of scarce medical resources? If only one dialysis machine is available but several patients dying of kidney failure urgently need dialysis, how does one decide who gets dialyzed and who is left to die for lack of additional dialysis machines? If two patients need a life saving medication but only enough medicine is available for one patient, whose life is saved and whose is not? Should the precedences relating to religious status, social worth and personal dignity be considered as enumerated in the Talmud? How can such an approach be reconciled with the fact that no person's blood is redder than any other person's blood and that qualitative distinctions in the saving of life, according to Jewish law, should not be made?

A classic example of "lifeboat ethics" is described at B. B.M. 62a, which speaks of two people traveling in the desert far from civilization, and only one has a canteen of water. If both drink the water, they will both die, but if only one drinks, he can reach civilization but the other will die. Ben Petura rules that it is better that both should drink and die rather than one behold his companion's death. But Rabbi Aqiba rules that only the one who owns the canteen drinks, because the biblical verse "that your brother may live beside you" (Lev. 25:36) means that "your life takes precedence over his life." Rabbi Aqiba's reasoning seems to be self-evident. A person is obligated to save another's life if the latter is drowning or mauled by beasts or attacked by robbers (B. San. 73a; Mishneh Torah, *Hilchot Rotzeach* 1:14). If one fails to do so, one violates the biblical precept "you shall not stand forth against the life of your neighbor" (Lev. 19:16). This injunction is not applicable when one's own life would be endangered in the attempt to save the other. The other's life is secondary to one's own when both are at stake because "his blood is no redder than yours." The final legal ruling in the case of the single canteen of water is in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Aqiba.

How are these classic biblical and talmudic sources applied to modern medical situations involving triage, the allocation of scarce medical resources and rationing? Are the criteria used by society to ration services and to determine the allocation of scarce resources different from those used by individuals in the conduct of their private lives? Are the ethical standards different for society and for individuals. Rabbi Moshe Tendler states that "societal ethics are more than individual ethics. Whereas individual ethics must be taken into account in societal decisions, there is more to society than the individuals in it."[40] Support for this position can be found in several classic Jewish sources. The Talmud states that, to prevent abuses, captives should not be ransomed for more than their value (M. Git. 2:6). The kidnappers must not be encouraged to seize more people and make excessive ransom demands that will impoverish the community. If society had to pay large sums of money to ransom kidnap victims, that money could not be allocated to other pressing societal needs. B. Git. 45a continues:

> Come and hear: Levi ben Darga ransomed his daughter for 13,000 dinari of gold [showing that an individual is allowed to pay exorbitant fees if he wishes, and the reason why society may not spend large sums of money to redeem captives is to protect the community].

It is thus clear that a man is allowed and perhaps obligated to ransom his wife or daughter for a very large amount of money. The underlying point of the Talmud is that societal ethical standards differ from those to be used by individuals in the allocation of scarce financial, medical or other resources. Society may not expend an inordinate amount of its limited resources to redeem captives, although the rich may pay their entire fortune to ransom a close relative. Clearly, a distinction is made in Judaism between societal ethics and individual ethics.

An individual physician must treat all patients equally, usually on a first come, first served basis. The physician must do whatever is necessary to care for the patient irrespective of cost. The physician should not be involved in rationing at the bedside. The physician's only concern should be the here and now of the patient. Society, however, must be concerned about long range planning and future generations and can, therefore, make decisions based on considerations of cost or social status (Judaism gives priority to orphans and widows). Hence, governmental spending caps are consistent with Judaic teaching.

AIDS—A Jewish View

The acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) has been described as this century's greatest health peril. Many thousands of patients have already died from the disease and there is no cure yet available. The emotional toll on patients with AIDS, their families, and their caregivers is enormous. Most patients with AIDS are intravenous drug users or homosexuals.

Judaism condemns homosexuality as an immoral act characterized in the Torah as an abomination. We are nevertheless duty bound to defend the basic rights to which homosexuals are entitled. The Torah teaches that even one who is tried, convicted, and executed for a capital crime is still entitled to the respect due to any human being created in the image of God. Thus, the corpse may not go unburied overnight (Deut. 21:23). The plight of Jewish AIDS victims doomed to almost certain death should arouse our compassion.

In Judaism, the value of human life is infinite. Whether a person is a homosexual or not, we are obligated to give him proper care if he is sick, charity if he is needy, food if he is hungry, and a burial after death. If he breaks a law of the Torah, he will be punished according to the transgression. Even if AIDS were a punishment by God for the sin of homosexuality, Jewish tradition teaches us that such a divine affliction may serve as an atonement for that sin, or the patient may repent while ill, making the AIDS victim even more deserving of our mercy and loving-kindness as a fellow Jew.

The compassion of Jewish law in requiring treatment for AIDS patients, however, should not be confused with acquiescence to the behavior of homosexuals who develop AIDS. Under no circumstances does Judaism condone homosexuality, which Judaism characterizes as an abomination. Nevertheless, the patient with AIDS should be treated and his life saved. To stand idly by and see the homosexual die without trying to help is prohibited (Lev. 19:16). Evil should be banned, but the evildoers should be helped to repent (Ps. 104:35).

Other Issues

This essay presents the Jewish attitude toward five major topics relating to sexuality and procreation (that is, the beginning of life), seven major topics relating to death and dying (that is, the end of life), and five other medical ethical topics. There are obviously many other medical ethical questions that are beyond the scope of this chapter. Such questions include truth telling and professional secrecy, sterilization, transsexual surgery, sex-preselection, genetic engineering, hazardous medical and/or surgical therapy, human experimentation, among many others.

For example, how does Judaism view a physician's treating close members of his or her own family? May a male physician care for his own mother? May a female physician minister to her own brother? Does Jewish law prohibit cigarette smoking based on the danger to life it represents? Are people not charged with preserving, dignifying and sustaining their God given life? Smoking would seem to be in direct conflict with this charge, since lung and other cancers, cardiac and chronic lung ailments, and other maladies are common consequences of smoking. Are Jewish physicians obligated to inform their patients of these considerations?

Does Judaism recognize the concept of risk-benefit ratio? Does Judaic law consider the statistical probability of prolonging life versus the mortality rate or the odds of

shortening life? May a dying patient be exposed to a hazardous therapeutic procedure that offers a slim chance of a cure, even though the chances of survival are much less than even? How does one define "slim"? If a physician cannot recommend a specific experimental treatment or procedure on the basis of sound scientific principles, may he or she offer it as a "one chance in a million?" Would Judaism prefer an approach in which a patient's health is left to chance?

One area in medical ethics that is just beginning to receive the attention of Rabbinic scholars is mental illness and psychiatry. What does Judaism have to say about transsexual surgery, transvestitism, alcoholism, drug addiction, psychotherapy, psychotropic drug therapy, and a host of related issues?

Conclusion

In the Jewish tradition, a physician is given specific divine license to practice medicine. According to Maimonides and other codifiers of Jewish law, it is in fact an obligation upon the physician to use medical skills to heal the sick. Not only is the physician permitted and even obligated to minister to the sick, but also the patient is obligated to care for his or her own health and life. People do not have title over their life or body. They are charged with preserving, dignifying and hallowing that life. They must eat and drink to sustain themselves and must seek healing when ill.

Another cardinal principle in Judaism is that human life is of infinite value. The preservation of human life takes precedence over all but three biblical commandments: the prohibitions against idolatry, murder, and forbidden sexual relations such as incest. Life's value is absolute and supreme. Thus, an old man or woman, a mentally retarded person, a deformed baby, or a dying cancer patient have the same right to life as healthy people in their prime of life. In order to preserve a human life, the Sabbath and even the Day of Atonement may be desecrated and all other rules and laws (save the above three) are suspended for the overriding consideration of saving a human life. The corollary of this principle is that one is prohibited from doing anything that might shorten a life even for a very short time, since every moment of human life is of infinite value.

These and other principles of Judaism guide the Jewish physician in the practice of medicine. As more physicians become familiar with the Judaic principles relating to the practice of medicine, and as more rabbis become aware of the daily ethical judgments required of the physician, the answers to ethical queries such as those reviewed above become more readily available. Such answers need to be consonant with the physician's ability to practice medicine, using the most up-to-date advances in medical science and biomedical technology. However, such answers must also remain true to traditional Judaic teachings as transmitted by God to Moses and the children of Israel.

Fred Rosner

Notes

[1] An earlier version of this entry was published as "Jewish Medical Ethics," in *The Journal of Clinical Ethics* 6, num. 3 (1995). It is used here with permission.

[2] David Feldman, *Birth Control in Jewish Law* (New York, 1968), p. 60.

[3] Moshe Feinstein, *Iggrot Moshe*, vol. 1, *Even Haezer* #65.

[4] Feldman, op. cit., p. 248.

[5] See Fred Rosner, *Modern Medicine and Jewish Ethics* (New York, 1986), pp. 91–105.

[6] The New York State Task Force on Life and the Law, *Surrogate Parenting. Analysis and Recommendations for Public Policy* (New York, May, 1988).

[7] *Report of the Committee of Inquiry into Human Fertilization and Embryology*, Cond 9314 (London, HM Stationary Office, 1984).

[8] Fred Rosner, et al., "Ethical Considerations of Reproductive Technologies," in *New York State Journal of Medicine*, 1987, vol. 87, pp. 398–401.

[9] David Feldman and Fred Rosner, eds., *Compendium on Medical Ethics. Jewish Moral, Ethical and Religious Principles in Medical Practice* (Sixth edition, N.Y.: Federation of Jewish Philanthropies, 1984), pp. 51–52.

[10] J. David Bleich, *Judaism and Healing. Halakhic Perspectives* (New York, 1981), p. 88.

[11] David Feldman, *Marital Relations, Birth Control and Abortion in Jewish Law* (New York, 1975), pp. 152–294.

[12] J. David Bleich, *Contemporary Halakhik Problems* (New York, 1977), pp. 325–371.

[13] I. Jakobovits, "Jewish Views on Abortion," in Rosner and Bleich, *Jewish Bioethics* (New York, 1979), pp. 118–133.
[14] Fred Rosner, "Abortion," in Rosner and Bleich, op. cit., pp. 139–160.
[15] *Iggrot Moshe, Choshen Mishpat*, part 2, #71.
[16] *Halachah Urefuah* (Jerusalem, 1980), vol. 1, pp. 304–306.
[17] *Tzitz Eliezer*, vol. 13, #102, and in *Assia*, vol. 13, 1976, pp. 8–10.
[18] *Jewish Medical Ethics* (New York, 1975), pp. 119–125.
[19] *Iggrot Moshe, Choshen Mishpat*, part 2, #73–75.
[20] *Tzitz Eliezer*, vol. 5, #28:5; vol. 9, #46; vol. 10, #25; vol. 13, #87 and #89; vol. 14, #80–81; vol. 15, #37.
[21] Fred Rosner, "Rabbi Moshe Feinstein on the Treatment of the Terminally Ill," in *Judaism*, 1988, vol. 37, pp. 188–198.
[22] Fred Rosner, "Definition of Death in Jewish Law," in *New York State Journal of Medicine*, 1983, vol. 83, pp. 973–978.
[23] F. Veith, J. Fein, M. Tendler, et al., "Brain Death 1. A Status Report of Medical and Ethical Considerations," in *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 1977, vol. 238, pp. 1651–1655.
[24] *Iggrot Moshe, Yoreh Deah*, part 2, #174.
[25] Ibid., part 3, #132.
[26] Fred Rosner, *Modern Medicine and Jewish Ethics*, pp. 313–333.
[27] Feldman and Rosner, *A Compendium on Medical Ethics . . .*, p. 109.
[28] Fred Rosner, *Modern Medicine and Jewish Ethics*, pp. 335–350.
[29] Fred Rosner, *Modern Medicine and Jewish Ethics*, pp. 247–261.
[30] Mishneh Torah, *Hilchot Shevuot* 5:17 and *Hilchot Chovel Umazik* 5:1, based on B. B.Q. 91b.
[31] Shulchan Aruch, *Yoreh Deah* 369:1 and 374:2.
[32] Fred Rosner and J. David Bleich, *Jewish Bioethics* (New York, 1971), pp. 377–397.
[33] Shulchan Aruch, *Yoreh Deah* 349:1–2 and Mishneh Torah, *Hilchot Avel* 14:21, based on B. A.Z. 29b.
[34] Shulchan Aruch, *Yoreh Deah* 357:1 based on "his body shall not remain all night upon the tree" (Deut. 21:23). See also B. San. 46b.
[35] Mishneh Torah, *Hilchot Avel* 12:1, based on "but thou shalt surely bury him on that day" (Deut. 21:23). See also B. San. 46b and Y. Naz. 7:1.
[36] Mishneh Torah, *Hilchot Tumat Met* 3:1, and Shulchan Aruch, *Yoreh Deah* 369:1.
[37] I.Y. Unterman, *Shevet Miyehudah* (Jerusalem, 1955), pp. 313–322.
[38] *Guide for the Perplexed* 3:17 and 3:48.
[39] Fred Rosner, *Modern Medicine and Jewish Ethics*, pp. 419–432.
[40] M. Tendler, "Rabbinic Comment on Triage of Resources," in *The Mount Sinai Journal of Medicine*, 1984, vol. 51, pp. 106–109.

Medieval Judaeo-Arabic Literature

Judaeo-Arabic literature designates the rich *oeuvre*, literary and scientific, created by the Jews of Muslim lands in the Judaeo-Arabic language during the medieval and modern periods. Essentially, this language is a form of medieval (also termed middle) Arabic that deviates from classical Arabic in that it reflects some neo-Arabic dialectic features and pseudo-corrective elements. It is also distinguished by two other features that demonstrate its Jewish origin: the use of Hebrew rather than Arabic script and the occurrence of Hebrew and Aramaic words, usually of religious orientation.

Judaeo-Arabic literature is gradually receiving recognition as an independent field within the Jewish and Arabic studies. This process corresponds to a certain extent to the wider legitimization of the cultural heritage of the Jews from Arab lands during the last two decades, as the result of the changing historical consciousness of Israeli Jews (and to a lesser degree, Jews in the diaspora). Several reasons explain the earlier marginalization and relative neglect of Judeao-Arabic culture and the recent revival of academic and popular interest in it.

From a popular and sociological perspective, the Ashkenazi-centric (Eastern-European) orientation that characterized modern Zionism and the State of Israel in its first decades has given way, particularly since the 1980s, to a pluralistic conception of its cultural heritage. This is partly the result of the successful struggle of Jews originating from Arab lands, who make up more than 50% of Israel's Jewish population, to receive greater recognition and access to positions of political and economic power. The growing prospect of peaceful coexistence with the Arabs, as experienced throughout the 1990s, also contributed to the maturing of Israeli society and to the loosening of its ideological constraints in identifying the "Arab" with the enemy. A new openness towards Arabic music and literature naturally

converges with a revival of interest in Judaeo-Arabic culture and in the long individual history of the major Jewish oriental communities (North-African, Iraqi, Persian, Syrian).[1]

In academic circles, the medieval (secular) Hebrew poetry of the Jews of Muslim Spain (Andalucia) had always been regarded as one of the pinnacles of Jewish creativity, studied and taught as an expression of "the Sephardi Golden Era." In this conception were included some philosophical and poetic works written originally in Judaeo-Arabic, which had entered the Hebrew canon through medieval translations, such as *'Arugat ha-Bosem* by Moses Ibn Ezra (c. 1055–c. 1138).[2] Nevertheless, the rich and varied Judaeo-Arabic literature written in Spain and outside it, in the fields of science, poetics, philosophy and exegesis, which was not channeled into the Hebrew corpus by the medieval translators (mainly of the Tibon family), was generally left outside the sphere of scholarly interest. Though the extent and importance of this literature was already known in the nineteenth century, it was neglected partly as the result of the purist tendency of early Jewish studies to concentrate on classical Hebrew sources.

Another reason for this relative neglect was the historical demise of Judaeo-Arabic literature among its native communities: Most of it did not reach print and survived only in manuscript sources. Some of it was lost altogether due to the adoption of spoken Arabic dialects or spoken Spanish (Ladino) in many of the oriental communities that had previously mastered classical Arabic (the most consistent exception to this rule being the Yemenite community, which kept a live tradition of classical Arabic education). This process began in the wake of the disintegration of the Muslim Empire and the great expulsions from Spain during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, when waves of Ladino speaking Jews settled in Arab lands and changed the linguistic fabric of their Jewish communities. This process deepened once the colonial powers, generally welcomed by the Jews and favorable to their social mobility, had encouraged accomplishment in European tongues.[3]

Scholarly interest in Judaeo-Arabic literature was revitalized in the 1960s, largely due to Shelomo Dov Goitein's seminal works, most notably his *A Mediterranean Society*, which drew a detailed and vibrant socio-historical portrait of the Jews of the Orient during the tenth-thirteenth centuries, largely based on Judaeo-Arabic sources from the Cairo Genizah.

The renewed availability of Judaeo-Arabic manuscripts housed in the former Soviet Union since the 1990s, especially those known as the Firkovitch Collections, has partly contributed to the intensification of research into this literature.[4] The more salient factors behind this recent development, however, are in my view the theoretical shifts that have occurred, mainly during the past two decades, in Jewish studies as a whole, the maturation of its disciplines, and its entering into what has astutely been called a "post-ideological" era.[5]

The history of the Jews during the Middle Ages, particularly under Christendom, is not as bound as it was to the Zionist ethos, nor is it studied necessarily as an inevitable precursor to the horrific ending of the age-old Jewish entity in Europe. Although Islam has always enjoyed a more positive image in this respect, the study of the Jews under medieval Islam has to a certain extent been subdued under the effects of the modern Arab-Israeli conflict and by the dominance of European Jewry in defining the cultural agenda of Israeli establishment. As both these factors are gradually being transformed, they have relaxed the former reserve in recognizing the Arabic literary output of the Jews of Islam as a phenomenon worthy of independent research. They have also effected the renewed interest in Jewish-Muslim interaction during the Middle Ages, of which our main documentary source, from the Jewish perspective, is Judaeo-Arabic literature.

Throughout this entry the term "Judaeo-Arabic literature" is used to designate all fields of Arabic writing, whether fiction or non-fiction (literary or scientific), in which the Jews of Arab and Muslim lands gave expression to their interests and creativity. The linguistic characteristics and definitions of "Judaeo-Arabic" are elaborated, followed by a survey of the academic study of Judaeo-Arabic literature. The main part of this

entry includes a classification of the Judaeo-Arabic corpus, as reflected in the Cairo Genizah, into major types and genres. These are surveyed from a novel perspective that takes into account the complexity of the Judaeo-Arabic genre system, with more extensive sections devoted to the particular (and interrelated) fields of translation, exegesis and grammar. Due to the vastness of this corpus, which stretches from medieval to modern times, the outline has been delimited to the medieval period, particularly to the "golden" or "classical" era of Judaeo-Arabic literature (tenth-thirteenth centuries), in which it knew a great flowering in all genres and sub-genres. We end with an analysis of the possible functions of these genres.

Linguistic Definitions of Judaeo-Arabic

The Judaeo-Arabic language is most simply defined as a form of classical Arabic written in Hebrew script that contains vernacular features unique to the spoken Arabic of medieval (and modern) Jews. In the history of research, Judaeo-Arabic writings have mainly been analyzed from a linguistic perspective, with less attention to their value as expressions of an authentic and vibrant literary culture. This is mostly due to the fact that the foundations in this field were laid by linguists who studied Judaeo-Arabic as an aspect of the development of Arabic language in general.

Joshua Blau provided the first systematic linguistic description of Judaeo-Arabic as a branch of what he termed "middle Arabic."[6] In his view, Jewish and Christian writers of the Middle Ages, who had not internalized the ideal of pure (classical) Arabic expression (*'arabiyyah*), lapsed more easily to substandard forms of writing than did their Muslim contemporaries. They nevertheless did strive to write in classical Arabic, and this caused them to over-hit the mark by using ungrammatical constructions ("pseudo-corrections"), which became a hallmark of their writings. Blau applied the term "middle Arabic" both in a chronological and in a stylistic sense. Chronologically it refers to the medieval stage of Arabic, as a link between old and new Arabic. Stylistically it designates the mixed language of medieval Arabic texts, which are essentially written in classical Arabic yet betray vernacular elements akin to modern Arabic dialects, as well as pseudo-classical features. Christian Arabic and Judaeo-Arabic were thus conceived as two distinctive branches of this mixed medieval form of written Arabic.

This double-fold (problematic) terminology led Blau to re-define middle Arabic and restrict it to the latter stylistic sense, as a mixed language[7] while applying the term neo-Arabic in describing the vernacular elements of middle Arabic. Texts that contain few neo-Arabic elements are defined by him as Middle Arabic Standard, while others in which this element is salient are defined as Substandard. In Blau's current definition, Judaeo-Arabic, as a representative of middle Arabic, is characterized by two additional features: the use of Hebrew script and the use of proper Hebrew and Aramaic words or their Arabicized forms (as loanwords).[8]

This revised definition has also been challenged, mainly from the perspective of sociolinguistics, which provides an alternative model for the linguistic description of Judaeo-Arabic. Kees Versteegh, for instance, considers Jewish and Christian Arabic as creolized dialects, which due to the isolation of these ethnic groups did not reach the stage of decreolization.[9] Another socio-linguistic model is applied by Benjamin Hary, who defines Judaeo-Arabic as an "ethnolect," meaning, a language used by a specific ethnic community, which gives expression, in this case, to specific Jewish themes that constitute the cultural discourse of a Jewish writer and a primarily Jewish audience.[10] Accordingly: "Judaeo-Arabic is not just a language, it is a Jewish language, typical of Jewish communities in the Diaspora which adopted a local language and wrote in Hebrew script with Hebrew and Aramaic elements penetrating the lexicon and the grammar. The language was used by Jews for Jewish readers and speakers and treated mainly Jewish themes in its literature. This, by itself, justifies granting Judeo-Arabic the status of a separate language or at least a separate ethnolect."[11]

Most scholars agree, nonetheless, in tracing the historical development of Judaeo-Arabic to three main periods, according to its orthography, syntax and lexicon: Firstly, the pre-classical stage which is marked by a phonetical form of spelling Arabic in Hebrew letters, attested in manuscript sources dating from the eighth and ninth centuries. Secondly, the classical stage (tenth-thirteenth centuries). During this period Judaeo-Arabic spelling stabilized, emulating, in the main, classical Arabic orthography with regard to the graphic representation of Arabic *matres lectionis* and other features. This stage is closely identified with the relatively stylized Judaeo-Arabic works of Saadiah Gaon (882–942), whose numerous copies in the Cairo Genizah reflect this form of spelling. Thirdly, the post-classical stage (fourteenth century to the modern era), which is characterized by some return to phonetic forms of spelling, vernacular features in writing and the development of new literary types.[12]

Judaeo-Arabic Literature and Its History of Academic Study

The stages identified in the linguistic development of Judaeo-Arabic often serve in describing its literary development, without the proper distinction being drawn between linguistic and literary functions. Judaeo-Arabic Bible translations, for instance, are usually divided into three periods: pre-Saadianic, Saadianic and post-Saadianic, mainly according to their orthography.[13]

Recent years have witnessed a renewed interest in Judaeo-Arabic literature and a variety of detailed studies have been devoted to individual Judaeo-Arabic works. These have served to emphasize the growing need for an integrative study of the literary culture of the Jews of Arab lands, whether in the medieval, pre-modern or modern periods. As to the medieval period, which concerns us here, an overall view, encompassing the multifarious documentary, fictional and non-fictional sources of Judaeo-Arabic as an unbroken textual entity remains a major *desideratum* for future research.

Medieval Judaeo-Arabic literature has rarely been regarded as a *sui generis* phenomenon, which requires independent tools of research. In reality, it still suffers from the effects of its nineteenth century portrayal as a "mixed" literature, dressing Jewish themes an Arabic tongue or Arabic themes in a Jewish tongue, "impure" in its forms of expression and writing. The title of Moriz Steinschneider's key work, *Die arabische Literartur der Juden* (Berlin, 1902), reflects something of this standpoint. Its importance lies, nevertheless, in presenting the first systematic attempt to provide a taxonomy of names, writers and branches of Judaeo-Arabic literature, according to the manuscript sources available at the time, dating mainly from the thirteenth-fourteenth centuries. In his the preface to the English adaptation of his work ("Introduction to the Arabic Literature of the Jews," in *JQR* (Old Series) vols. 9–13), Steinschneider describes his arduous search for manuscripts throughout Europe since 1845. He also expresses his personal esteem for the unique phenomenon of Judaeo-Arabic, yet continues to relate to it as a "derived," secondary literary culture:

> Arabic and German are the only languages and nationalities which have been of essential and continuing influence on Judaism. A statement of the extent and duration of the usage of the Arabic language by the Jews would, indeed, exceed the limits of what is here our principle subject, viz. The Arabic literature; but here I only give some hints of the life, customs, institutions, and their designations.[14]

Since Steinschneider's seminal work the only overall surveys to have appeared are encyclopedic entries on "Judaeo-Arabic literature." In the *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, Abraham Halkin defined this literature as "writings by Jews in Arabic, generally with Jewish coloring."[15] George Vajda's definition in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* is no less reflective of the reserved stance which dominated twentieth century scholarship:

> Judaeo-Arabic dialectal literature is essentially "popular," even in the case of a version based on a mediaeval Hebrew translation of a "classical" work originally written in Arabic such as "Duties of the Heart" by Bahya Ibn Pakuda [. . .] The whole spectrum of Judaeo-Arabic writing of the earlier period, however, though of greater cultural range, but most of the time lacking in aesthetic

> preoccupations, cannot be classified as literature in the strict sense of "belles letters." Given these conditions it is difficult to speak of "the history" of Judaeo-Arabic literature.[16]

S.D. Goitein, on the other hand, appears to have recognized the insufficiency of classicist categories in describing the Judaeo-Arabic *oeuvre*. After devoting an important volume to the education system in the Genizah period, in which he traced the main literary types which served in the higher-education syllabus, on the basis of Cairo Genizah sources, Goitein turned to the socio-historical study of the Jews of Islam.[17] His colossal six-volume achievement in describing their *Mediterranean Society*, which contains significant discussions of cultural, educational and literary manifestations of this society was less concerned, however, with offering a novel classification or analysis of Judaeo-Arabic literature *per se*.[18]

Towards a Redefinition of "Genre" in Judaeo-Arabic Literature

The branches of Judaeo-Arabic literature originally surveyed by Steinschneider include poetry, grammatical thought, philosophy, polemics, homiletics, translation, exegesis, medicine and astronomy, as well as distinctive literary types such as special commentaries on the Ten Commandments. Considering the difficulties that faced him in obtaining manuscript sources, and the fact that he had no occasion to avail himself to the Arabic and Judaeo-Arabic material in the Cairo Genizah, the fruits of Steinschneider's labor are impressive, both in scope and in detail.

The new manuscript sources uncovered in the Genizah of the Ben Ezra Synagogue in Cairo (known as the "Cairo Genizah"), as well as in "genizot" of Karaite synagogues in the city (contained in the Firkovitch Collections) have mostly become available to scholars throughout the second half of the past century.[19] In themselves these necessitate a comprehensive re-evaluation of Judaeo-Arabic literature. In addition, the modern breakthroughs in anthropological, linguistic and literary thought, inspired by formalist and structuralist trends that took hold throughout the twentieth century, render Steinschneider's evaluative categories insufficient in describing the idiosyncrasies of Judaeo-Arabic literature and explaining its dynamics.

A revision is required on the descriptive level, in which the taxonomy of types and genres may be updated according to new manuscript sources. It is also needed on the theoretical level, in which the application of socio-literary models may yield more productive explanations concerning the functions fulfilled by these types and genres.

Modern discourse analysis has largely abandoned the rigid approach to genre boundaries, which derived from classical and classicist divisions and sub-divisions of epos, lyric and drama. "Genre" is generally more loosely defined, as, for instance, "a distinctive category of discourse of any type, spoken or written, with or without literary aspirations."[20] Structural critics, such as Roland Barth, conceive of genre as "a set of constitutive conventions and codes, altering from age to age, but shared by a kind of implicit contract between writer and reader."[21]

The habitual division between documentary, scientific and literary sources, which still prevails in the description of Judaeo-Arabic literature, seems outdated in the light of conceptions which highlight the communicative function of a text or discourse. The flowery formulas for beginnings and endings of Judaeo-Arabic private and business letters, for instance, function as literary genres no less than rhymed prose. They too are composed of "a set of constitutive conventions [. . .] shared by a kind of implicit contract between writer and reader."[22] Their re-appraisal requires a change in focus, which allows for the study of such documents not only as historical sources, but also as literary sources of creative writing.

A theoretical model that may be fruitfully applied to Judaeo-Arabic literature was developed by the formalist literary critic Tzvetan Todorov, who describes a genre, literary or otherwise, as the outcome of the process of social codification, wherein "the recurrence of certain discursive properties is institutionalized." The norms established by this codification require a measure of

transgression so that they retain their visibility and vitality. Thus, "a new genre is always the transformation of one or several old genres: by inversion, by displacement, by combination."[23]

This process of "genre generation" suggests an inherent dependency between old and new literary forms, and controverts attempts to evaluate them in terms of "primary" and "secondary" creations. It suggests a continuing dynamic, both on the synchronic level in which genres are transgressed and restructured in daily forms of discourse, possibly over a range of languages, and on the diachronic level, in which fresh genres rise out of the shells of old transmitted forms and revitalize them. Both levels are essential for the understanding of Judaeo-Arabic literature, whose generative system defies classification for classification's sake and requires clarification of its socio-rhetorical functions, in view of the discourse communities which it served through various periods and regions.[24] This attempt will not be undertaken here, however, since it requires an extensive assimilation of new materials, many of which are still in unedited manuscripts, as well as a long-term perspective on the material which has not yet come into fruition.

The following outlines the main genres of Judaeo-Arabic literature in the light of an extensive research project undertaken recently in the classification of Judaeo-Arabic sources from the Cairo Genizah. The survey still echoes, in part, the conventional grouping into disciplinary fields (philosophy, exegesis, grammar, etc.), which is typical to the above-mentioned encyclopedic entries. It also addresses, nevertheless, the unique contribution of the Cairo Genizah to our understanding of the generation process of Judaeo-Arabic genres and sub-genres and the question of their functions.

Classification of Judaeo-Arabic Literature as Reflected in the Cairo *Genizah* Sources

The Hebrew term *genizah* (derived from the Persian root *ganaz*) designates the Jewish practice of assigning discarded or worn-out Hebrew writings to special storage or interment. This is for fear they may contain the name of the Lord (the tetragrammaton), which is forbidden to be "taken in vein" (Exod. 20:7, Deut. 5:11). The loft of the main Rabbanite Synagogue, Ben-Ezra, in Old Cairo (Fusʿâʿ) served for this purpose mainly throughout the tenth-fourteenth centuries. Due to its unique climatic and physical conditions some 200,000 fragments, mostly pertaining to this period, were preserved. They were largely recovered by Solomon Schechter in 1897, and two-thirds of them (an estimated total of 140,000 fragments) are now housed in the Cambridge University Library.[25] It is roughly estimated that the language of over a half of the manuscripts found in the Genizah is Judaeo-Arabic.[26] These contain documentary and literary sources of a religious and non-religious nature. They were miraculously preserved, since Hebrew script was an essential feature in the consignment of writings to the Genizah.

The first descriptive volume on Judaeo-Arabic material in the Cairo Genizah Cambridge Collections, containing a detailed survey of the subject matter of around 8,000 fragments, has recently been published.[27] The volume represents an initial attempt to fully identify and systematically describe a concentrated primary source of classical Judaeo-Arabic literature.[28]

The Genizah's unique contribution lies in the copies of non-canonical and popular Judaeo-Arabic works it has preserved, alongside *ad hoc* personal compositions which also found their way into its corpus. With regard to canonical Judaeo-Arabic writings (such as Maimonides' *Commentary on the Mishnah*) it has preserved additional (and often unattested) textual traditions. In general, however, copies of such works have also reached us through other manuscript collections, sometimes in a better state of preservation, as in the case of complete codices. In comparison to these collections (including those recovered from Karaite synagogues and burial grounds in Cairo, known as the Firkovitch collections, which contain full or partial codices of Judaeo-Arabic and Hebrew works),[29] the material found in the Ben Ezra Genizah is still unrivalled. This

is precisely due to the unguarded fashion in which it absorbed material of popular nature. In this it sheds light not only on the guest-room of Judaeo-Arabic culture, but also on its kitchen and bedroom, as well as what was hidden under its carpets.

Around 2,500 out of the 8,000 fragments in the above-mentioned classified corpus are defined as documentary, including personal, commercial and official letters, lists and inventories of goods, books and names, financial accounts, legal and administrative documents, pen trials, and writing exercises. The difficulty of separating the documentary category from the strictly literary category sharpens our awareness of the limitations of any system of classification. The remaining 5,500 fragments are defined as literary in the widest sense, including fiction and non-fiction.

These literary fragments have been ranked below into basic classes of texts, i.e. wide genre groupings, largely based on a thematic outline of their subject matter and some stylistic categorization typical of Judaeo-Arabic literature as a whole. Within this listing, more extensive discussion has been devoted to the fields of translation, exegesis and grammar.

As mentioned above, the thematic classification essentially follows the known branches of Judaeo-Arabic literature (philosophy, *halakhah*, etc.), by expanding them in scope and detail. It is recognized that this process is a continuation of the taxonomic enterprise established by Steinschnedier. The novelty lies in the understanding that archival tagging, however minute, serves as a means of exploring the functions of these literary kinds (see following) and not as an end in itself. A further difference lies in the subdivision of the thematic branches according to stylistic criteria as well as thematic criteria, which consciously attempt to steer away from charged evaluations of "pure" and "mixed" forms.[30]

Bible Translations and Commentaries constitute a major genre of Judaeo-Arabic literature.[31] Although it is possible to categorize them as two separate genres, Judaeo-Arabic translations and commentaries essentially formed part of the same genre, in that they fulfilled complementary functions in the study and elucidation of the biblical text. Unlike some of the Aramaic *Targumim*, particularly Onkelos, whose function in Synagogue worship influenced their self-contained nature as biblical versions, with an independent transmission tradition, the Judaeo-Arabic versions were cast from the start as biblical study-aids, in a threefold structure, which is reflected in most of the manuscript sources. First, the Hebrew verse or a cluster of Hebrew verses is quoted in Hebrew, usually in the form of an *incipit* (the first word or phrase of the given verse), sometimes in full. Second, a Judaeo-Arabic translation is provided of the full Hebrew verse. Third, the verse is commented upon in Judaeo-Arabic, including explication of matters of language, style and content.

This threefold literary structure appears to have entered Jewish writing on the Bible only from the Muslim period, and to have been influenced by parallel models of Qur'anic exegesis. It is already attested in anonymous Genizah fragments from the ninth century, yet became consolidated in the works of tenth and eleventh century exegetes, whether Rabbanites, such as Saadiah Gaon and Samuel ben Hofni, or Karaites, such as Salmon ben Yeroham and Yefet ben Eli. Numerous copies of their commentaries have been preserved in the Cairo Genizah, almost all of which attest this threefold structure.

Of Saadiah Gaon's many Arabic translations and commentaries of biblical books preserved in the Genizah, only his translation of the Pentateuch (known as the *Tafsîr*) is sometimes found copied independently from his longer commentary (known as the *Sharʿ*). This is primarily due to the interpretive nature of his translation rather than any oral function it may have fulfilled in synagogue. While some Yemenite communities to this very day are known to read the *Tafsîr* out aloud after *Targum Onkelos* as part of the Sabbath synagogue ritual, this was not the initial function of its separation from the *Sharʿ*. As Saadiah himself attests in his Introduction to the *Tafsîr*, the differentiation was meant for a didactic rather than liturgical purpose. He wished to provide readers and worshipers who could not accommodate his long and complex

commentary on the Torah with a succinct self-contained Arabic version of the Torah, which contained the end result of his interpretive deliberations. It is therefore likely that Saadiah himself prepared two editions of his work on the Pentateuch, one containing his translation and commentary and the other the translation alone.[32]

Karaite exegetes, particularly Yefet ben Eli, who during the second half of the tenth century translated and commented on all of the Hebrew Bible, consistently kept to this threefold structure, which served as a primary means of instructing their readers in the biblical text. Their translations are clearly integrative with the commentaries that follow them, so that if the reader wishes to understand the reasoning behind the translation of a particular verse he must attend to the commentary. For the Karaites, translation remained a major medium in clarifying the literal meaning of the biblical text. The establishment of primary meaning was also the object of their grammatical commentaries on the Bible (see below). Grammar and translation were linked in their system of interpretation. These served as the building blocks of their biblical commentaries, whose third layer, the explicatory section, was usually devoted to forms of "higher criticism," namely, the discussion of structural, literary and theological aspects of the biblical text, with additional references, at times, to their symbolic or messianic implications.

The Karaite tradition of Arabic Bible translation preserved and continued literal modes,typical of early, pre-Saadianic, Judaeo-Arabic renderings of the Hebrew Bible. These did not result from a simple or conservative imitative impulse, but were adapted to the Karaites' ethos of biblical study, reflecting their wish to arrive at an accurate presentation of the language of the biblical text, and hence at a correct understanding of its meaning.[33]

With regard to the Genizah sources, an artificial separation of the Judaeo-Arabic versions from the commentaries that immediately follow them may, nevertheless, be applied for the purpose of isolating the actual translation traditions which were in existence in the Judaeo-Arabic milieu. Five sub-categories emerge as the result of the linguistic analysis of these versions, and in consideration of their social and educational functions:[34]

1. Early (ninth century) anonymous translations written in pre-classical Judaeo-Arabic.
2. Saadiah's translations or those that closely follow his works (Saadianic), written in classical Judaeo-Arabic.
3. Karaite translations, also written in classical Judaeo-Arabic.
4. Late translations (known as *shurʿ*), post Saadianic, dating from the thirteenth-sixteenth centuries, reflecting post-classical Judaeo-Arabic features.
5. Early and late translation glossaries, which selectively follow a biblical passage, chapter or book, and sometimes contain lists of difficult biblical words or *hapax legomena* from one or several biblical books.[35]

No systematic study has yet been conducted concerning the sub-types of biblical commentaries attested in the Genizah sources. Many recent works, however, have been devoted to aspects of Karaite and Rabbanite Judaeo-Arabic exegesis, and the reader is advised to consult them for further detail.[36]

Grammar and massorah were clearly linked to the larger field of translation and exegesis, as an adjacent genre, more restricted in its scope. Its study and generation were mainly the work of professional circles, whose expertise lay in the textual aspects of the Hebrew Bible: its language, vocalization and transmission traditions.[37] The following subgenres may be identified:

1. Biblical dictionaries and lexicons (e.g., Jonah ibn Janâh's *kitâb al-ʾuʿl* or David ben Abraham al-Fasi's *kitâb jâmiʿ al-ʾalfâʾ*).
2. Works on Hebrew grammar and its verbal system.
3. Grammatical commentaries which focus on syntactical issues, rare words and etymologies, in elaborating lengthy biblical passages or books.
4. Biblical, Mishnaic, and Talmudic glossaries (cf., the fifth category of translation material mentioned above) which may also be classified as embryonic dictionaries, when viewed from the perspective of linguistics rather than that of translation.
5. Masoretic compilations on the reading traditions of the Hebrew Bible, such as Mishael ben Uzziel's *Treatise on the differences between Ben Asher and Ben Naphtali* (*Kitâb al-khilaf*).

A few words should be devoted in this context to recent discoveries based on the Cairo Genizah and Firkovitch sources that have highlighted the formative role of the early Karaite scholars in basing biblical study on the interrelated disciplines of grammar, translation and exegesis. In these studies it has been shown that the early Karaite tradition of Hebrew grammar originated in the Karaite grammatical schools that were already well-developed in Iran during the ninth century. It was later brought to Palestine by Karaite scholars who migrated there from the Persian regions, sometimes via Iraq, during the tenth and eleventh centuries.[38]

Two main traits distinguished the early Karaite grammatical tradition: First, it had a clear hermeneutic function in that its purpose was the application of grammatical analysis in order to elucidate the precise meaning of the biblical text, and not the analysis of Hebrew language*per se*. The Karaite concern with linguistic form arose from the conviction that there was a direct link between form and meaning.[39] Second, it relied on technical Hebrew terms and hermeneutic principles which are attested in Rabbinic and Masoretic sources, predating the tenth century, such as *leshon ya'id* (= singular), *leshon 'avar* (= past), and other such terms that are also found in the ancient Masoretic list known as *diqduqe miqra*. In particular, it applied the Hebrew term *diqduq* in the sense that it has in masoretic and rabbinic sources as: "investigating the fine points of Scripture."[40]

Despite the Karaites' ideology in rejecting the institution of Oral Law, which brought about their gradual disassociation from Rabbinic Judaism, the early Judaeo-Arabic sources teach us that the Karaite grammatical tradition was not originally isolated from mainstream Judaism. Rather, it became distinct from the tradition followed by the Rabbanites only towards the eleventh century.[41] Moreover, Karaite biblical study at large, and its grammatical emphasis in particular, grew out of a deep association with the professional bearers of the textually orientated stream of rabbinic exegesis (*peshat*), and Maortetic circles, which emphasized the disciplined analysis of the Bible's structure.[42]

Law (***halakhah***) forms the second major category of Judaeo-Arabic literature.[43] It includes the following sub-genres:

1. Continuous commentaries on the Mishnah and Talmud from the Rabbinic and Gaonic periods, such as Maimonides' *Commentary on the Mishnah*.
2. Halakhic monographs which discuss or enumerate religious laws in thematic clusters (including: divorce, inheritance, ritual slaughter etc.), such as the works of Hai Gaon, Samuel ben Hofni Gaon and Isaac Alfasi.
3. Mishnaic and Talmudic glossaries or word-lists, which are similar in style to the biblical translation glossaries mentioned above.
4. Discussions on the theory and didactic methods of halakhah.

Literature and folklore (***midrash* and *aggadah***) are related to the former category in that they correspond to the second element in the classical Rabbinic division between writings inspired by the legal corpus of the Hebrew Bible and writings inspired by its non-legal, literary corpus. In general they constitute a smaller portion of the manuscript sources, though they clearly reflect a high level of literary creativity.[44] These may be divided into four sub-genres, as follows:

1. A common source of popular and ethical legends is *The Book of Comfort* (*Kitâb al-faraj ba'd al-shiddah*) by Nissim Gaon (also called Ibn Shahin), which makes use of a known Arabic genre by this name, and also derives from Hebrew midrashic literature. Similar in popularity, though more strictly adaptive of midrashic sources is the Arabic compilation by David ben Abraham Maimonides known as *Midrash David ha-Nagid*. Proper Arabic translations of classical midrashim such as *Eikhah Rabbah* are also found in the Genizah corpus.
2. A separate genre consists of tales (*qiṣaṣ*) on biblical or apocryphal characters such as Abraham, Joseph and Hannah, sometimes in rhymed prose. These are connected to late Muslim sources, yet are not considered, for the time being, part of the Muslim literature of *qiṣaṣ al-'anbiyâ'*.[45]
3. Popular historical chronicles include the Alexander Romance and Arabic accounts of the Maccabees' history.
4. Famous works of Arabic literature such as *A Thousand and One Nights* and *Kalila wa-Dimna* are attested both in Arabic and Hebrew script. To these may be added

transcribed sections of the Qur'an and the Arabic New Testament. The *maqâmah*, gird poem (*muwashsha*ʿ), love poem (*ghazal*), and rhymed prose (*saj*ʿ) are found both in Arabic and in Judaeo-Arabic, whether as original compositions or transcriptions from known Arabic works.

Liturgy and prayer include the following sub-genres:[46]

1. Arabic translations of the Passover Haggadah, Sabbath, Festival and daily prayers, especially the *Shema*ʿ and *ʿAmidah* prayers, as well as translations of Hebrew liturgy and independent Arabic liturgical compositions.
2. *Siddurim* (Prayer Books) by Saadiah Gaon and Solomon ben Nathan of Sijilmasa (South-West Morocco), in which the liturgical instructions (known as rubrics) and introductions are in Judaeo-Arabic, while the prayer text is in Hebrew.

Philosophy constitutes the third largest genre.[47] It may be divided into the following sub-genres:

1. Theology (*kalâm*), written in the outlook and style of Muʿtazilite Muslim theology yet applied to Jewish themes, such as Saadiah Gaon's *Book of Beliefs and Opinions* (*kitâb al-ʾamânât wal-iʿtiqâdât*).
2. Ethics, such as Maimonides' *Eight Chapters* (*thamâniya al-fuʿl*), which originally formed part of his commentary on Mishnah Avot, yet circulated separately, as an independent ethical work, or Baʿyah ibn Paqdah's *Duties of the Hearts* (*kitâb al-hidâyah ʾilâ frâʾid al-qulb*).
3. Poetics, mostly limited to copies from the works on literary theory by Moses ibn Ezra, such as *The Book of Discussion and Conversation* (*kitâb al-muʿâʿara wal-mudhâkara*).
4. General philosophy, such as Maimonides' *Guide to the Perplexed* (*dalâlat al-ʿâʾirîn*).
5. Philosophical commentaries on the Hebrew Bible. There is some overlap between philosophy and biblical exegesis, since many a Bible commentary will discuss purely philosophical themes such as the nature of creation, while philosophical works may offer insightful literary discussions into biblical passages.[48]

Polemics is a small but significant genre in Judaeo-Arabic literature. On the one hand it may be classified as a sub-category of philosophy, since classical polemical works such as Judah Halevi's *The Book of Refutation and Proof on the Despised Faith*, known as *The Kuzari* (*Kitâb al-radd wal-dalîl fî al-dîn al-dhalîl; al-Kitâb al-khazari*) concentrate on the philosophy of religion as well as on aspects of comparative religion, between Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Lesser known anonymous anti-Christian works such as *The Polemic of Nestor the Priest* (*Qiʿat mujâdalat al-ʾusquf*) may also be placed under this category. A significant sub-genre of Judaeo-Arabic polemics, however, is devoted to internal Jewish controversy, particularly between Rabbanites and Karaites. The Cairo Genizah contains many copies of anonymous anti-Karaite treatises written by Rabbanites, or such anti-Rabbanite treatises written by Karaites, mainly on the subject of the Jewish calendar, which formed a major source for polemical strife in the tenth and eleventh centuries.

Mysticism is yet another relatively small Judaeo-Arabic genre. Due to the formative influence of rational Mutazilite philosophy in the classical period of Judaeo-Arabic literature, as reflected in the seminal works of Jewish philosophy written by Saadiah Gaon and Maimonides (see above), mystical trends were relegated to the margins. They may reflect, nonetheless, live traditions of ancient Jewish mysticism which continued into the Muslim period, as preserved in Saadiah Gaon's*Commentary on Sefer Yesirah* (*Tafsîr kitâb al-mabâdî*). As philosophical training, and, more important, the attraction to rational philosophy gradually weaken throughout the post-classical period, new works of Jewish mysticism begin to emerge in Judaeo-Arabic. These reflect the influences of Sufi Islam upon Jewish thought, as in the case of Abraham Maimonides' *Kitâb kifâyat al-ʿâbidîn* (known in Hebrew as *Sefer ha-maspik le-ʿovedey ha-shem*), or Ovadiah ben Abraham Maimonides' *Treatise on the Pool (al-maqâla al-ḥawḍîyya)*.

Scientific works constitute a small but distinctive genre, which may be divided into the major sub-fields of mathematics, medicine and astronomy. The medical literature is particularly rich and its subject matter varies considerably, consisting of medicine proper (i.e., the description of diseases, diagnosis and treatment, pharmacology) and para-medical material relating to the management of patients and the medical profession. The most copied work in the medical field is ʿ Ali ibn ʿIsâ, *tadhkirat al-kaʿâlîn*, transcribed into Hebrew letters.[49]

Quasi-scientific materials form a sub-genre as well, including astrological almanacs, calendrical treatises relating to intercalation, dream interpretation manuals, magic and occultism, all of which fall under the wider conception of the sciences in the early medieval period.[50]

The Functions of Judaeo-Arabic Genres in the Cairo Genizah Material

In general, any form of classification tends to simplify complex, multi-layered literary phenomena. The above survey only captures a glimpse of the intricate and elaborate types and genres which form Judaeo-Arabic literature. Many of the sub-categories overlap in that they contain a common thematic or stylistic thread, by which they may be assigned to the same draw, or to different draws, depending on the emphasis of the classifier.

Moreover, the relative proportions suggested above do not mirror the exact dimensions of the literary repertoire of the period. This is primarily due to the haphazard nature of the disposal of material in the Cairo Genizah, and to the general preference given in this disposal process to discarded manuscripts with a conspicuous Hebrew element, such as a Bible quotation. It should be noted, therefore, that the three dominant major genres outlined above, namely, Bible translations and commentaries, law (*halakhah*), and philosophy duly reflect major types of writing typical of the religious thought of the Genizah period. Nevertheless, they do not necessarily represent the fields of interest which dominated the private library of the average Jewish intellectual, even more so, the tastes of other, popular or non-intellectual, social strata.

Notwithstanding the above reservations, three major functions emerge from the classification of the corpus:

1. The generic function defines the level of admixture between Arabic and Hebrew elements in a Judaeo-Arabic text. In other words, the genre in which the writer chooses to express himself determines his selection of a linguistic register, whether inclining towards standard or substandard middle Arabic. A Bible commentary, for instance, does not only contain Hebrew quotations but also other Hebrew phrases and loan words that are embedded in the Judaeo-Arabic discourse. This is due to the writer's discursive dependence on a Hebrew source text and to the common knowledge he shares with his audience concerning its semantic range. A medical text, on the other hand, will include very few or no Hebrew elements, since it does not discuss a Hebrew source text or derive from its conceptual world. Moreover, it is not intended for a wide Hebrew reading audience but a professional audience, familiar with general Arabic sources. In this respect, the classification of the Genizah material highlights the importance of genre as a parameter in the language definition of a Judaeo-Arabic text, alongside the formal parameters relating to the use of Hebrew script and the incorporation of Hebrew and Aramaic words.[51]

2. The educational impetus that lies behind some of the genres underscores their wider communicative function. Different discourse communities influenced the formation of diverse genres and affected the preference given to some over others.[52] The needs of educational circles explain the high proportion of Bible translations and commentaries as well as halakhic manuals and monographs. These served as basic constituents of the educational curriculum of the Genizah period, which was geared to prepare the Jewish adolescent for his religious roles, such as synagogue worship, and his advanced communal roles, such as juriconsultancy (*dayyanut*).[53]

The popularity of certain philosophical genres may also be explained by a wider pedagogical context or conception, which stressed the importance of acquiring rational modes of thought and discussion. Logic became the hallmark of the average Arab and Jewish intellectual of this period. The learning of grammar and philosophical reasoning whether applied to the biblical text or as independent fields of interest were conceived as a means of availing the mind to an admired rational (*kalâm*) type of thinking.

The dominance of Saadiah's Bible versions

and commentaries in the Genizah corpus suggests that regular men and women were able to comprehend the crux of his interpretive method, which obliges knowledge of basic philosophical concepts and terminology. It appears, therefore, that these concepts were internalized through the wider educational system of the community and home, even if philosophy was only studied as an independent discipline by advanced pupils or individuals.

The popular translations and glossaries of the Hebrew Bible found in the Genizah form a distinctive genre, which tells of the Bible's function as a center-piece of basic education, more than the Mishnah or Talmud. The anonymity of the *ad hoc* translations and glossaries, as well as their unconstrained style, suggests that they were composed by teachers and pupils in classroom settings, and that they were combined with linguistic study, meant to drill the student in Hebrew, as a second language.

Certain literary types, nevertheless, did not receive expression nor legitimacy through the education system, but through other social and cultural settings. These include the popular legends, dream interpretation manuals, love poems, and other genres that tell of what was read or composed far from the supervising eye of the educator, spouse, or parent. While educational needs may explain the cultivation of some genres, different communicative needs, related to gender and class, may expound the amplification of other genres. In general, many of these genres attest to the strong links between the writers—laymen, artists and intellectuals of the period—and their discourse communities and reflect the attentive adherence of these writers to the changing collective needs of their audiences. Such adherence forms the nucleus of the communicative function; a function that has been vital to the renewal of genres in Jewish literature throughout the ages.

3. Ultimately, the generative function emerges as common to all literary types observed in the Genizah corpus. In other words, the generative function defines the transformational aspect of Judaeo-Arabic creativity, in light of the above quoted observation by Todorov that "a new genre is always a transformation of one or several old genres: by inversion, by displacement, by combination."[54]

This transformation is facilitated by the double media of translation and adaptation that operate as the main generators of new forms in Judaeo-Arabic literature. In almost every genre or class of texts it is possible to distinguish a three-layered division between a new Judaeo-Arabic composition (less accurately termed "original"), an adapted composition, and a translated one, whether from Hebrew or Aramaic into Judaeo-Arabic or from Arabic into Judaeo-Arabic. The medieval boundaries between original, translation and adaptation were far more flexible than their modern parallels.

The aspect of adaptation may explain the neglect in the study of Judaeo-Arabic as an authentic literary phenomenon, even though this process is precisely what makes it into a fascinating, complex, and incomparable literary culture. Just as the language of the Jews of Arab lands was middle Arabic, occupying the middle ground between the conservative classical forms and the innovative spoken tongue of every day life, so was their cultural world a middle world, whose members wondered comfortably between Arabic and Jewish cultures and literatures. This movement engendered modes of thinking and expression that became an inseparable part of the personal and collective identity of the men and women of the Genizah period, and for this reason it gained heightened expression in their literary tastes and needs.

Judaeo-Arabic culture relied on its ability to transfer, transmit, and filter various subject matter from language to language. The new literary forms created through this process—in fiction and non-fiction—were often born out of old forms by way of inversion, displacement, and combination. The media of translation and adaptation functioned as a sieve through which known classes of texts were passed and transformed into something different and new; the norms of the "original" genre retained visibility by being transgressed and were revitalized, simultaneously, by becoming refashioned

norms. Translation and adaptation were thus the activators of the process of genre generation. The classes of texts born of this process should therefore be regarded not only as primary and authentic but also as revolutionary in respect of the cultural horizons that permitted their creation and growth.

Let us consider, first of all, the main direction of this translation process, that is, from Hebrew into Judaeo-Arabic. Apart from the Hebrew Bible, the Genizah corpus also contains fragments from a wide range of canonical Hebrew and Aramaic works that were translated into Arabic, including the Mishnah, Talmud, Passover Haggadah, the *ʿAmidah* and *Shemaʿ* prayers, liturgical and midrashic sources. These texts are usually set in the conventional mode of Bible translation, including a quotation from the beginning of a verse in the source text (*incipit*), followed by a literal translation of the full verse. The fact that few copies of such works (excluding the Bible translations) have survived suggests that they did not reach the near canonization afforded to Saadiah's biblical versions but remained in the sphere of oral translation, sometimes jotted down by a teacher or pupil. Nonetheless, what survived reflects a small portion of what was actually in existence and is indicative of a wide translation culture. This culture answered the varied needs of writers and audiences who sought to understand and explain the basic contents of key works, essential to religious and spiritual life, by subjecting them to different forms of translation from Hebrew and Aramaic into Arabic.

The phenomenon of adaptation from Hebrew into Judaeo-Arabic is more complex in nature than that of translation and more difficult to trace. The Genizah corpus contains Judaeo-Arabic midrashim that were clearly translated, word for word, from Hebrew midrashim, while others do not point to a discernible Hebrew source text. It is possible that these represent novel Judaeo-Arabic works inspired by Hebrew midrash yet also derived from Arabic legendary sources, and, naturally, from the imaginative power of their composers. Works such as Nissim Gaon's *kitâb al-faraj baʿd al-shiddah* and the *Midrash of David ha-Nagid* demonstrate this phenomenon. Their many copies in the Genizah corpus reflect the immense popularity of this genre of the midrashic sermon.

The media of translation and adaptation also served in the opposite direction, from Arabic into Judaeo-Arabic. This process did not only take place on the formal level of transcription from Arabic into Hebrew letters (as in the case of the transcribed Qurʾan fragments or those of the *Thousand and One Nights*), but also on the level of content. Sometimes the subject matter of the Arabic text was lightly adapted or changed in order to suit a Jewish audience. In more intricate cases, entire models were adopted from Arabic literature and philosophy and then fostered in Judaeo-Arabic contexts, through which they entered Hebrew or even European literature.[55]

To the extent that we inquire whether a Judaeo-Arabic liturgical work represents a translation or an adaptation from a known Hebrew source text, or whether it is essentially a novel composition, so we should ask whether a Judaeo-Arabic love poem, *maqâmah*, or medical work is simply a transcription from Arabic into Hebrew letters. In most cases it constitutes a more flexible form of composition, completely innovative at times, since it is adapted to the needs of a different discourse community. Only the detailed study of such texts will enable us to appreciate their true nature and the composite cultural needs they may have fulfilled.

Even more tangled is the background of those Judaeo-Arabic genres whose mutual influences are difficult to trace in the history of contacts between Hebrew and Arabic literatures. In the literary sphere, the stories (*qiṣaʿ*) of Abraham and Joseph mentioned above are a case in point, as are the adaptations of Hellenistic materials such as the Alexander romance. In the philosophical sphere, texts of a mystical inclination, combining Jewish and Sufi elements may also pose the question of who influenced whom in the chain of transmission.

In conclusion, no matter how complex the Judaeo-Arabic text under discussion, it essentially reflects a written or an oral tradition that passed through different registers of language, from classical to middle Arabic or vice versa, from Hebrew or Arabic

into Judaeo-Arabic. In this process the tradition inevitably went through a change of content, however minute, that mediated between it and the target culture as a whole. The beginning and end of this process of "transculturation" are difficult to envisage, yet it was a process typical of Jewish existence in dispersion throughout the ages.[56]

From the earliest periods of encounter with dominating languages and cultures, long before the contacts with the Arabs, Jews applied the media of translation and adaptation (into Greek, Aramaic and Persian) as a means of bridging the gap between the old and the new, between the self and the other, and thus retained an independent, agile and vibrant identity. It is likely that these entrenched modes of cultural existence were regenerated in the encounter with Arabic thought and literature; translation and adaptation becoming a means of self-expression for any Jew that spoke or wrote in Arabic. If the boundaries of one's world correspond to those of his language, then one who absorbs a bilingual or multilingual atmosphere from early childhood is likely to experience a certain flexibility of mental boundaries. For such a person translation serves not only as a cultural outlet but also as a psychological outlet of primary importance, in that it enables some level of integration between different identities. It is apparent that Jewish existence in the world of Islam and the cultural flowering it inspired turned translation into an essential medium of self-expression and creativity, in all forms of Jewish language, whether spoken or written, sacred or mundane.

Summary

In discussing the question of genre in relation to medieval Judaeo-Arabic literature several ideas were raised regarding the nature of this literature and the possible paths to its comprehensive, more adequate understanding. These are dependent on the continuing work of identification and classification of Judaeo-Arabic material in the Genizah and other Judaeo-Arabic collections and will hopefully find further scope for clarification in ongoing research into this fascinating corpus. An exhaustive approach to Judaeo-Arabic literature that integrates the detailed description of its composite and illusive forms with the question of their socio-literary functions is still a *desideratum*, a challenge to all those who wish to reach a greater understanding of this unique cultural phenomenon.

As suggested above, one way of coming closer to this goal is by dissociating the narrow, technical definition of a text as "Judaeo-Arabic," whether Hebraic or Arabic in its linguistic emphasis, from the wider process of its understanding, based on a complex set of linguistic, literary, and social parameters. This understanding yields constructive insights when based on a functional model which examines the role of each genre on three separate levels, which mutually combine in the final analysis: First, the generic level, which isolates the smallest building blocks of a literary type, and studies their effects on the writer's choice of a linguistic register. Second, the communicative level, which determines the functions fulfilled by the text in the context of a specific discourse community, whether in educational, social or other settings. Third, the generative level, which investigates the transformation of old genres into new genres through the two-way media of translation and adaptation from Hebrew into Judaeo-Arabic and from Arabic into Judaeo-Arabic. In these three possibilities there lies potential for the fruitful study of Judaeo-Arabic literature, which transcends classification for the sake of clarification, and which does justice to the true dimensions of this grand oeuvre as a *sui generis* manifestation of a particular form of life.

MEIRA POLLIACK

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NOTES

[1] Despite the current Israeli-Palestinian crisis, this development is not, in my view, in jeopardy of reverting backward, though it may be slowed down.

[2] This medieval Hebrew adaptation represents only segments of Ibn Ezra's original magnum *Dissertation of the Garden on Figurative and Literal Language*. For a detailed analysis of this work see, P. Fenton, *Philosophie et exégèse dans le Jardin de la métaphore de Moïse Ibn ʿEzra* (Leiden, 1997).

[3] Further on these historical-linguistic developments see, for instance, N.A. Stillman, *The Language and Culture of the Jews of Sefrou, Morocco: An Ethnolinguistic Study* (Louvin, 1988), p. 5.

[4] The newly-available manuscripts (also dating from the tenth-thirteenth centuries) were collected in the nineteenth century from Karaite genizot in the Middle East by the Russian Karaite scholar and bibliophile Abraham Frikovitch. They are now housed in the Russian National Library. See M. Beit-Arié, "Hebrew Manuscript Collections in Leningrad," in *Jewish Studies* (1991), vol. 31, pp. 33–46 [Hebrew]; M. Ben-Sasson, "Firkovitch's Second Collection: Remarks on Historical and Halakhic Materials," in *Jewish Studies* (1991), vol. 31, pp. 47–67 [Hebrew]; D. Sklare, *Judaeo-Arabic Manuscripts in the Firkovitch Collections, The Works of Yʿsuf al-Basʿr* (Jerusalem, 1997), pp. 7–16 [Hebrew].

[5] See the remarks concerning the study of the Jews in medieval (Christian) Europe by the historian I.J. Yuval, *Two Nations in Your Womb* (Tel Aviv, 2000), pp. 11–15 [Hebrew].

[6] See J. Blau's seminal works: *The Emergence and Linguistic Background of Judaeo-Arabic, A Study of the Origins of Middle Arabic* (Jerusalem, 1981); *A Grammar of Christian Arabic based Mainly on South-Palestinian Texts from the First Millennium* (Louvin, 1966); *A Grammar of Mediaeval Judaeo-Arabic* (Jerusalem, 1961).

[7] See Blau, *A Grammar of Mediaeval Judaeo-Arabic* (1981), p. 215: "The mixed language of texts in which Classical, Neo-Arabic and pseudo-correct elements alternate, I prefer now simply to call Middle Arabic."

[8] See Blau, *Emergence*, pp. 34, 133–166.

[9] See K. Versteegh, *Pidginization and Creolization: The Case of Arabic* (Amsterdam and Philadelphia, 1984), pp. 8f., 29–32, 42f., 116.

[10] See B. Hary, *Multiglossia in Judaeo-Arabic, With an Edition, Translation and Grammatical Study of the Cairene Purim Scroll* (Leiden, 1992), pp. xiii-xiv, 55–69, 71–74, 103–111.

[11] See Hary, *Multiglossia*, p. 105. Cf., N. Stillman, *Jews of Sefrou*, pp. 3–4: "it was the medium of expression for one of the foremost periods of Jewish cultural and intellectual creativity." Also consider Blau's emphasis on the literary tradition of Judaeo-Arabic (*Emergence*, p. 49): "it was felt by the Jews themselves to be a distinct literary language. It was consequently used by writers who could equally well have written in more classical language, had they so chosen, and its distinctive character finds expression in the possession of its own literary tradition." For an updated survey of theories on middle Arabic and Judaeo-Arabic, see P.A. Bengtsson, *Two Arabic Versions of the Book of Ruth, Text Edition and Language Studies* (Lund, 1995), pp. 85–99.

[12] For a detailed survey of these historical stages, see Hary, *Multiglossia*, pp. 75–82. On the orthographic distinctions between pre-classical and classical Judaeo-Arabic, see J. Blau and S. Hopkins, "On Early Judaeo-Arabic Orthography," in *ZAL* (1984), vol. 12, pp. 9–27; "Judaeo-Arabic Papyri—Collected, Edited, Translated and Analysed," in *JSAI* (1987), vol. 9, pp. 87–160.

[13] See J. Blau, "On a Fragment of the Oldest Judaeo-Arabic Bible Translation Extant," in J. Blau and S.C. Reif, eds., *Genizah Research after Ninety Years: The Case of Judaeo-Arabic* (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 31–39. For an attempt to introduce additional social and structural criteria, see M. Polliack, "Arabic Bible Translations in the Cairo Genizah Collection," in U. Haxen, et al., eds., *Proceedings of the EAJS Copenhagen Congress 1994* (Copenhagen, 1998), pp. 35–61.

[14] See *JQR* vol. 12, p. 481.

[15] See *Encyclopaedia Judaica* vol. 10, pp. 410–423 (quote from p. 410).

[16] See *Encyclopaedia of Islam* vol. 4, pp. 303–307 (quote from p. 303).

[17] See S.D. Goitein, *Jewish Education in Muslim Countries, Based on Records from the Cairo Geniza* (Jerusalem, 1962) [Hebrew].

[18] See, nevertheless, Goitein's survey on the literary activity in his *Jews and Arabs, Their Contacts through the Ages* (New York, 1974), pp. 125–211, and, cf., his Introduction to *A Mediterranean Society, The Jewish Communities of the Arab World as Portrayed in the Documents of the Cairo Geniza* (Berkley, Los Angeles, and London, 1967), vol. 1.

[19] With regard to these collections see note 4 (above) and 26 (below). With regard to the Arabic and Judaeo-Arabic sources in the Cairo Genizah Collections, see G. Khan, "The Arabic Fragments in the Cambridge Genizah Collections," in *Manuscripts of the Middle East* 1 (1986), pp. 54–61; C.F. Baker, "Judaeo-Arabic Material in the Cambridge Genizah Collections," in *BSOAS* 58 (1995), pp. 445–454; M. Polliack, "Arabic Bible translations," pp. 35–61 and in following.

[20] See Webster's Third Dictionary.

[21] See M.H. Abrahams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms* (New York, 1981), p. 71; for an illuminating survey of the concept of genre in folklore, literary, linguistic and rhetoric studies see J.M. Swales, *Genre Analysis* (Cambridge, 1990), pp. 33–44.

[22] For examples of such letters, see S.D. Goitein, *Jewish Education in Muslim Countries*, pp. 20, 46.

[23] See his article, "The Origin of Genres," in *New Literary History* 8 (1976), pp. 161–162, and his discussion of genres as "classes of texts" on the same pages. For further elaboration, see T. Todorov, *Le genres du discours* (Paris, 1978), pp. 44–59. Also, cf., Swales, *Genre Analysis*, pp. 36–38.

[24] The search for a socio-rhetorical model in evaluating Judaeo-Arabic literature may be paralleled to attempts already undertaken to provide an alternative model for the linguistic description of Judaeo-Arabic (see above).

[25] For further information on the Cambridge Genizah Collections and the background to their discovery, see S.D. Goitein, *Mediterranean Society*, vol. 1, pp. 1–6; C. Reif, *A Guide to the Taylor Schechter Genizah Collection* (Cambridge, 1973); "The Genizah Fragments, A Unique Archive?" in P. Fox, ed., *Cambridge University Library: The Great Collections* (Cambridge, 1998); *A Jewish Archive From Old Cairo, The History of Cambridge University's Genizah Collection* (London, 2000).

[26] In addition to the Judaeo-Arabic material, the Cambridge Genizah Collections contain some 7,000 fragments in Arabic script that did not reach the Ben-Ezra loft by design but by accident; see G. Khan, "The Arabic Fragments."

[27] Some ten percent of these are in Arabic script. This classified corpus constitutes around a fifth of the Arabic material (in both scripts) preserved in the Cambridge Genizah Collections as a whole.

[28] See C.F. Baker and M. Polliack, eds., *Arabic and Judaeo-Arabic Manuscripts in the Cambridge Genizah Collections, Arabic Old Series (T-S Ar. 1a-54)* (Cambridge, 2001). On the nature of the classification process undertaken in this project, see my introduction to the volume (pp. ix-xxii). The detailed subject index appended to the volume further illustrates the complex typology of Judaeo-Arabic literature.

[29] See note 4 above.

[30] In the following categories are mentioned various Judaeo-Arabic works by medieval authors. Examples of Genizah fragments containing these works may be traced through the index of *Medieval and Classical Authors and their Works*, appended to Baker and Polliack, pp. 561–571. For modern editions of these works (when available), refer to the *Bibliography and Short Title Index* appended to the same volume, pp. 551–561.

[31] Around twenty percent of the fragments in the classified Genizah Corpus belong to this category.

[32] See further in M. Zucker, *Rav Saadya Gaon's Translation of the Torah: Exegesis, Halakha, and Polemics in R. Saadya's Translation of the Pentateuch* (New York, 1959) [Hebrew]; M. Polliack, *The Karaite Tradition of Arabic Bible Translation, A Linguistic and Exegetical Study of Karaite Translations of the Pentateuch from the Tenth to the Eleventh Centuries* (Leiden, 1997), pp. 77–90, and the additional references there.

[33] Further on Karaite translation methods, see M. Polliack, ibid.; "Medieval Karaite Views on Translating the Hebrew Bible into Arabic," in *JJS* 47 (1996), pp. 64–84; "Medieval Karaite Methods of Translating Biblical Narrative into Arabic," in *Vetus Testamentum* 48 (1998), pp. 375–398).

[34] For further details on each of these categories see M. Polliack, "Arabic Bible Translations."

[35] See, for example, M. Polliack and S. Somekh, "Two Hebrew-Arabic Biblical Glossaries from the Cairo Genizah" in *Pe'amim* 83 (2000), pp. 15–47 [Hebrew].

[36] See, for instance, D. Frank, "Karaite Exegesis," in Magne Saebo, ed., *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament: The History of Its Interpretation* (Gottingen, 2001), vol. I/2, pp. 110–128; G. Khan, ed., *Exegesis and Grammar in Medieval Karaite Texts* (Oxford, 2001); M. Polliack, "The Emergence of Karaite Bible Exegesis," in *Sefunot* 22 (1999), pp. 299–311) [Hebrew]; "On the Question of the Pesher's Influence on Karaite Exegesis," in G. Brin and B. Nizan, eds., *Fifty Years of Dead Sea Scrolls Research* (Jerusalem, 2001), pp. 275–294 [Hebrew]. For the Gaonic milieu, cf., especially D.E. Sklare, *Samuel ben Hofni Gaon and His Cultural World. Texts and Studies* (Leiden, 1996).

[37] Around 400 fragments in the classified Genizah corpus (some five percent) belong to this category.

[38] See especially two recent works by Geoffrey Khan, *The Early Karaite Tradition of Hebrew Grammatical Thought, Including a Critical Edition, Translation and Analysis of the Diqduq of Ab Ya'qb Ysuf ibn N' on the Hagiographia* (Leiden, 2000) and *Early Karaite Grammatical Texts* (Atlanta, 2001). Also of relevance are his previous studies devoted to the Karaites' practice of transcribing the biblical text into Arabic characters, which reflects their wish to preserve the accurate reading tradition of the biblical text. See G. Khan, *Karaite Bible Manuscripts from the Cairo Genizah* (Cambridge, 1990); "The Medieval Karaite Transcriptions of Hebrew into Arabic Script," in *IOS* 12 (1992), pp. 157–176.

[39] See G. Khan *The Early Karaite Tradition*, pp. 9–21, 132–133.

[40] Ibid., pp. 14–15.

[41] On the differences between the early tradition and the work of later Karaite grammarians of the eleventh century, such as Ab al-Faraj Harn, who were more deeply affected by the Arabic grammatical tradition (especially that of the Basran school), see G. Khan "'Abu al-Faraj Haran and the Early Karaite Grammatical Tradition," in *JJS* 48 (1997), pp. 314–334; N. Basal, "Excerpts from the Abridgment (*al-Mukhta'ar*) of al-Kitâb al-Kâfî by Ab Fara' Harn in Arabic Script," in *Israel Oriental Studies* 17 (1997), pp. 197–225 (Hebrew).

[42] For a concentrated and updated bibliographical survey of recent research on Karaism and Karaite literature (including Judaeo-Arabic texts), see D. Frank, "The Study of Medieval Karaism," in N. De Lange, ed., *Hebrew Scholarship and the Medieval World: Studies in Honour of Raphael Loewe* (Cambridge, 2001), pp. 3–22.

[43] Around fifteen percent of the fragments in the classified Genizah corpus belong to this category.

[44] Around five percent (some 200 fragments) in the classified Genizah corpus belong to this category.

[45] See H. Ben-Shammai, "Judaeo-Arabic Abraham Story of Muslim Origin—New Fragments," in *Hebrew and Arabic Studies in Honour of Joshua Blau* (Jerusalem, 1993), pp. 111–134 [Hebrew].

[46] Around 400 fragments (some five percent) of the classified Genizah corpus belong to this category.

[47] Around 800 fragments in the classified Genizah Corpus belong to this category.

[48] On this phenomenon in Saadiah's writings, see H. Ben-Shammai, "The Exegetical and Philosophical Writing of Saadya Gaon: A Leader's Endeavor," in *Pe'amim* 54 (1993), pp. 63–81 [Hebrew].

[49] See the detailed introduction to H.D. Isaacs, ed., *Medical and Para-Medical Manuscripts in the Cambridge Genizah Collection* (Cambridge, 1994).

[50] Altogether around 200 fragments (some 2 percent) of the scientific and quasi-scientific type have been identified in the classified Genizah corpus.

[51] On the "almost universal presence of Hebrew elements" in Judaeo-Arabic writings and their dependence upon the "personal style of the author, upon literary genre, and upon the presupposed Hebrew (and Aramaic) knowledge of the intended audience," see Blau, *Emergence*, pp. 44–47. Nevertheless, the inclusion of generic criteria as part of the actual language definition of Judaeo-Arabic is not addressed in Blau's discussion.

[52] According to B. Malinowski's work on folklore and genre (see *A Scientific Theory of Culture and Other Essays*, New York, 1960), "genres contribute to the maintenance of social groups because they serve social and spiritual needs" (see Swales, *Genre Analysis*, p. 35). In this respect, genres that derive from an educational communicative setting may also contribute to the survival of their social groups.

[53] For further details, see Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society*, vol. 2, chapter 4: "Education and the Professional Class," pp. 171–211.

[54] See Todorov, "Origin of Genres," p. 161. Also consider the common root of the forms "genre" and "generation," traced to the Latin noun "genus"—meaning, birth, species, or type, and the Greek verb "gignomai"—meaning, to be born, to belong to a type. This etymology illustrates the conceptual connection between creativity and typology, i.e., between the individual transformative process of creating something new and the presubjection of any novel form to a wider distinctive type.

[55] For an attempt to explain the transference of literary models from Arabic into Hebrew, see R. Drory, *The Emergence of Jewish-Arabic Literary Contacts at the Beginning of the Tenth Century* (Tel-Aviv, 1988) (Hebrew).

[56] In this respect, Judaeo-Arabic belongs to the group of Jewish languages, including Judaeo-Spanish (Ladino) and Judaeo-German (Yiddish), that functioned throughout lengthy periods and in defined geographical areas as live literary traditions and symbols of Jewish identity. On Judaeo-Arabic in relation to other Jewish languages, see Hary, *Multiglossia*, pp. 71–74, 103–111. On the term "trans-culturation" that designates transference on the combined levels of language and culture, in all that they entail, see J. Barr, *The Semantics of Biblical Language* (Oxford, 1961), p. 4.

Messiah

Probably no religious idea seems more fundamental to Judaism or more essentially Jewish than that of the messiah, Israel's eschatological redeemer. It is widely supposed that Judaism is a messianic religion and that hope for the messiah's appearance is the major focus of, and driving force behind, Jewish religious belief and behavior. Indeed, two commonplaces of western history are that, in first century Palestine, enhanced Jewish anticipation of the messiah's arrival was the backdrop for the emergence of Christianity and that conflicting opinions about the messiah's appearance, identity, activity, and implications caused the division between Judaism and Christianity. The idea of the messiah thus appears fundamental to the structure and character of Judaism and therefore to the emergence of Christianity.

But recent research suggests that these assumptions need qualification. Judaism's scripture, the Hebrew Bible, contains no doctrine of an eschatological redeemer and does not use the term "messiah" to refer to one. Postbiblical Jewish texts—the Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, Dead Sea Scrolls, the writings of Philo and Josephus—use the term "messiah" infrequently and inconsistently.

On their basis, there is no reason to think that the Jews of first century Palestine were anticipating a messiah. The idea of the messiah is barely present in the Mishnah, the foundational document of Rabbinic Judaism. A key reason for the unclarity about the messiah in these texts is that the Temple-centered religion practiced in Jerusalem and described in Scripture, which dominated ancient Judaism and is the basis of all other forms of Judaism, provides no religious role for a savior. God alone is Israel's—and therefore humanity's—redeemer. In this religion, living according to God's design—ethically and ritually—maintains Israel's relationship with God, including the forgiveness of sin. "Levitical religion," as we might call it, offers no religious function for a messiah that is not already covered in some other way.

Of all the Jewish writings of the Second Temple and immediate post-destruction periods, only the New Testament—which became Christianity's scripture—offers the rudiments of a coherent doctrine of the messiah. Early Christian teaching about Jesus (though perhaps not Jesus' own teaching about himself) ultimately shifted the focus of redemption from God to the messiah. This shift, which made the messiah the medium of humanity's salvation, altered Judaism's structure and produced a new religion.

Ancient and medieval Rabbinic writings as well as the synagogue liturgy contain the category of "messiah." But, as in earlier writings, the pictures in these varied literatures are not consistent. In the Talmuds, "the messiah" is a secondary category, subordinate to the generative and more central components of the Rabbinic religious system. In Jacob Neusner's words, in Rabbinic literature, the messiah

> does not define a categorical imperative in the way that Israel and the gentiles, . . . sin and atonement, resurrection and the world to come, all do. . . . The Messiah-theme forms a subset of several categories and by itself does not take up an autonomous presence in the theology of the Oral Torah. The Messiah-theme fits into the primary categories but is itself divisible among them.

In this sense, for most forms of Judaism in ancient and medieval times, the messiah is present in, but not essential to, the workings of the Jewish religion.

There is one important exception and one significant qualification to this generalization. The career of Shabbetai Sevi (1626–1676), Judaism's most famous false messiah (and the movements that flowed from his messianic claims) is the exception. In 1666, Shabbetai Sevi, a charismatic figure born in Smyrna, was regarded as the messiah by substantial portions of the Jewish world. In an unprecedented act, he converted to Islam. Shabbetai Sevi's principal spokesman and interpreter, Nathan of Gaza, employed the doctrines of Lurianic Kabbalah to explain this conversion as a redemptive act that brought the world closer to salvation. Sabbateanism shifts the focus of Israel's redemption from God to the messiah and thereby alters Judaism's fundamental morphology.

The significant qualification concerns the matter of exile. For most of its history, Judaism has existed without a native center. Its scripture, theology, liturgy, practices, and most of its writings assume that Judaism's adherents are living as aliens, away from their native territory. The figure of the messiah emerges from the loss of the Davidic dynasty and of Israel's political autonomy. The messiah-theme, therefore, is inextricably bound up with the notion of exile, and the Jews' recovery of the land they regard as theirs inevitably has messianic overtones. By realizing the ancient promise of restoration, the contemporary establishment of a Jewish polity in the land of Israel raises unprecedented questions about the religious meaning of return from exile in terms of classic Jewish ideas of the messiah.

The following describes the main contours of the idea of the messiah in Judaism, with particular attention to the ancient period and to the interactions between the traditional Jewish messianism and Zionism. Its focus is on the place of the messiah-theme in the structure of Jewish religion rather than on messianism as the broad ideology of Jewish redemption. The so-called "messianic" movements that appeared in nearly every century sought—but failed—to ameliorate the position of the Jews, and they did not foster major changes in the workings of Judaism itself.

Israelite Antecedents

The term "messiah" means "anointed" or "anointed one." In ancient Israel, as in other Near Eastern cultures, the smearing or pouring of oil conferred leadership status on an individual, usually a priest, prophet, or king. The shift from the conception of the "messiah" as simply a current leader—a duly anointed king or judge, for instance—to the idea of a future redeemer for Israel is a function of both the nature of the Davidic monarchy and its dissolution after the destruction of the first Temple in 586/587 B.C.E. The conception of kingship represented by the divine promise that David's house will rule Israel in perpetuity—for example, in 2 Sam. 7—lays a foundation for the Israelite belief in an ideal future king, whose appearance fulfills that promise. Such a figure is the object of both hope and speculation in the writings of Israel's exilic and post-exilic prophets. The loss of the monarchy, political sovereignty, and the land of Israel itself constituted a cultural trauma that was written deep into Israel's national literature. The transformation of that literature into Judaism's scripture and the land of Israel's continued subjugation to foreign powers (save for a century of Hasmonean rule) institutionalized the trauma and made an ideal Davidic monarch and the exiles' return to the land conventional components of Jewish views of redemption. These hopes persist to varying degrees and forms throughout the history and literature of Judaism.

Jewish texts from biblical through the post-70 periods illustrate a progressive idealization of the future "anointed" king. Their speculations about the future king's rule range from restorative—an idealized but this-worldly Davidic kingdom—to utopian—an almost magical age of idyllic perfection. This development seems to be the basis of the idea of a divinely ordained figure who will redeem Israel at the end of time or the end of the age. As we shall see below, such figures, most of whom are not called "messiah," appear in Jewish literature from the Second Temple period. The wish for a new or ideal Davidic king retained its currency in several Jewish circles during the Second Temple period.

Jewish expectation of a restored Davidic monarchy intensified with the exiles' return from the Babylonian exile and ultimate rebuilding of the Temple during the Persian period, 540–330 B.C.E. However, the colonial context generated an important modification in ideas about Israel's redeemer. Persian rule allowed the Jews autonomy in "ritual and sacred institutions," which valorized the priesthood at the expense of the Davidic monarchy. Zechariah's claim (Zech. 3) that post-exilic Israel would be ruled by a diarchy—a king and a priest—responds to colonial policy by diminishing Israelite political claims in the face of non-Jewish rule.[1]

Continued foreign domination of the Jews in the land of Israel generated a *de facto* distinction between religion and politics that effectively removed the king from the realm of religion. For example, in the Bible, the Israelite king has no role in divine worship and is not responsible for the fall of rain. Moreover the cult is developed in the desert, not in a state. This literary strategy keeps the cult far from royalty and separates the issue of holiness from the question of Israel's sovereignty. A people rather than a polity, the Bible's Israel is bound together by its relationship to the cult, not to the throne. This clearly is an effort by the priestly authorities to focus Israel's relation to God around the cult rather than the state. Nothing in the cultic structure or narrative encourages the development of either monarchy or sovereignty.

Though the king was central in the period of the First Temple, in the Second Temple period, the priests were the dominant cultural and religious figures. Their vision of the nature and maintenance of Israel's relationship to God is spelled out in their editing of the Pentateuch. The religion they advocated—"levitical religion"—constitutes the background against which most of the relevant early Jewish texts about the messiah were written and shapes the contours of the messiah in later Judaism.

Levitical Religion and the Messiah

Judaism in the ancient Mediterranean was highly diverse, but its varieties were neither

equally distributed nor uniformly influential and important. Between the Persian period and 70 C.E., the dominant form of Judaism was the Jerusalem Temple and its cult. The religion represented by the Temple and its priestly personnel conceived of the life of Israel as a comprehensive and integrated system of disciplined engagement with God. That engagement largely took the form of prescribed and repeated behaviors, directed by a caste of priests, that revolved around and focused on a sacred center, a stable reference point—the Holy of Holies—where access to God was certain to occur. Before the Holy of Holies stood the altar, on which the priests offered animal and other sacrifices daily to maintain Israel's relationship with God and to secure God's forgiveness of sin, both individual and collective.

A religion of cult and sacrifice, as levitical religion was, is extremely powerful and difficult to abandon because it guarantees that one is in the presence of God. The Temple is the *Domus Dei*, the house of the god, and the priestly rituals maintain God's presence there. The life and death drama of the sacrifices graphically illustrates what is at stake in being right with God, and the rising smoke is tangible evidence that the relationship with God remains solid. Levitical religion is appealing and effective because it is immediate and concrete. Its interests and traits explain why it provides little place for a future messianic redeemer.

Levitical religion is a religion of distinctions. It maps out a system of categories—usually binary opposites such as clean/unclean, fit/unfit, holy/profane—in which everything that matters has its place. A major distinction is the absolute distinction between the living and the dead. The two states must not be confused or conjoined. The priests have no funerary responsibilities and are forbidden to come in contact with dead human bodies, which are regarded as a source of uncleanness. But, in levitical religion human death is religiously insignificant. It is a fact, and there is no effort to transcend it or triumph over it.

Levitical religion emphasizes the integration of mind and body. It maintains order through acts of conscious labor: proper moral actions and attitudes; correct offering of sacrifices; observance of food and sexual taboos; tithing of produce; celebration of Sabbaths and festivals; and so forth. In levitical religion, there is no categorical difference between what we now call ethics and ritual. Telling the truth, honoring one's parents, observing the Sabbath, and eating permitted food are all important and equally obligatory. Levitical religion is a religion of sanctification. Through conscious action Israel becomes a holy people and repairs any ruptures in its relationship with God.

Because it is centered around the Temple, levitical religion conceives of time cyclically. Every year as a repetition of every other year. The priestly writers thought paradigmatically rather than diachronically. Their ultimate interest is in nurturing and maintaining the already established relationship between God and Israel. Their preferred literary form was the list—for instance, the genealogies and series of rules of the Pentateuch's P document—rather than narrative.

The goal of levitical religion is not to escape the world but to preserve the present. There is no attempt to do away with the current social structure. Rather, everything in levitical religion reinforces the priestly vision of the cosmic order. For example, the festivals described in Leviticus—Passover, Booths, Pentecost, the New Year—are all intimately tied in to the cycle of the seasons. The Sabbath, which seems unique in the ancient near east, illustrates how levitical religion celebrates the received order of creation. The Sabbath commemorates the creation of the world. Israel rests as God rested at the end of the seventh day. This powerfully reinforces the idea that the order of creation is good, to be celebrated, and to be preserved.

In its ritual and its writing, levitical religion promulgated a synchronic vision of a centered, structured, hierarchical, and orderly reality. Its practitioners celebrated precision, lineage, precedent, and concreteness and had an exceedingly low tolerance for uncertainty, confusion, and ambiguity.

A religion of having what you want and keeping it, levitical religion in principle has no religious need for a redeemer, savior, or messiah. The consistent message of the priestly editing of Scripture is that so long

as the altar is effective, Israel's relationship with God is secure. In levitical religion, there is nothing religious a messiah can do that the altar cannot do. A redeemer is religiously unnecessary.

Rabbinic Judaism is the primary heir and continuator of the levitical religion represented in Scripture. Emerging from the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 C.E., its aim, in the absence of the altar, was to preserve Scripture's priestly ideals largely undisturbed. Rabbinic Judaism substituted piety, good deeds, and study of Torah for the altar, and it replaced the Holy of Holies with the sacred Torah scroll. Halakhah, Rabbinic religious praxis, derives from, and shares the values of, the levitical religion outlined in Scripture. Living rabbinically is comprised of a host of behaviors—ethical acts, good deeds, charity; food, purity, and kinship taboos, observance of Sabbaths, holy days, festivals, and prayer—that depend on and promulgate levitical categories. Hence, in Rabbinic Judaism and the forms of Judaism that follow it, the messiah will play an ancillary role and have little impact on religious practice.

Although the levitical worldview dominated and shaped the development of the messiah-theme in Judaism, it did not and could not extinguish the vision of redemption associated with a future or ideal Davidic king. So long as the Jews regard themselves as in exile, the wish for an heir of David who would lead the people back to its land remains a persistent leitmotif. In this sense, despite the levitical effort to limit redemption to the realm of religion, the messiah-theme always had the potential to be political.

The Messiah in Second Temple Literature

Any notion of a messianic belief or idea in ancient Judaism necessarily presupposes that "messiah" was a focal and evocative native category for ancient Jews. But a review of Israelite and early Judaic literature, the textual record produced and initially preserved by Jews, makes such a conclusion dubious at best. The noun *mashiah* ("anointed" or "anointed one") occurs thirty-eight times in the Hebrew Bible, where it applies twice to the patriarchs, six times to the high priest, once to Cyrus, and twenty-nine times to the Israelite king, primarily Saul and secondarily David or an unnamed Davidic monarch. In these contexts the term denotes one invested, usually by God, with power and leadership, but never an eschatological figure. Ironically, in the apocalyptic book of Daniel (9:25f.), where an eschatological messiah would be appropriate, the term refers to a murdered high priest.

The term "messiah" has scant and inconsistent use in early Jewish texts. Most of the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Pseudepigrapha, and the entire Apocrypha, contain no reference to "the messiah." Moreover, a messiah is neither essential to the apocalyptic genre nor a prominent feature of ancient apocalyptic writings. A rapid survey of the most pertinent materials helps to justify these generalizations.

The Maccabean documents, which disdain the revival of the Davidic dynasty, ignore the term. There is no messiah in Jubilees, nor in Enoch 1–36 and 91–104, nor in the Assumption of Moses, nor in 2 Enoch, nor in the Sibylline Oracles. The messiah is absent from Josephus' description of Judaism in both *Antiquities* and *Against Apion*, and also from the writings of Philo.

In Ben Sira, which has no interest in a future redeemer, the "anointed one" or "messiah" is the Israelite king—a this-worldly, political leader. The Qumran scrolls report two messiahs, one Davidic and one priestly, who are not necessarily eschatological figures. The scrolls also apply the term to the prophets. In Psalms of Solomon 17, which is neither apocalyptic nor eschatological, the messiah is an idealized, future Davidic king who also exhibits traits of sage and teacher. The term appears only twice in the Similitudes of Enoch (1 Enoch 37–71), where it denotes not a king but a transcendent, heavenly figure. In any case, its use in Enoch is dwarfed by other titles, such as "the Chosen One" and "the Son of Man." The half-dozen references in the first century text 4 Ezra offer conflicting pictures of the messiah. In 7:28ff. the messiah dies an unredeeming death before the eschaton, but later

chapters portray him as announcing and executing the final judgment. In 2 Baruch, which contains five references, the term applies primarily to a warrior, the slayer of Israel's enemies. In the Mishnah's legal contexts, messiah refers to an anointed priest, and the messiah as redeemer is negligible.

These texts offer little evidence of sustained thought or evolving Judaic reflection about the messiah. Thus, in early Jewish literature, the term "messiah" is notable primarily for its indeterminacy.

The Messiah and Early Christian Writing

In light of its insignificance in these texts, it is legitimate to ask why the category "the messiah" came to be seen as a fundamental and generative component of Israelite religion and early Judaism and why it persists as a major religious category in the west. It is fair to ask how so much has come to be written about an allegedly Jewish conception in which so many ancient Jewish texts manifest such little interest.

The hegemony of Christianity in the western world answers this question. The primacy of "the messiah" as a religious category and subject of academic study derives directly from early Christian word choice, theology, and apologetics. In contrast to the relatively infrequent references to the term "messiah" in Jewish literature cited above, the New Testament uses the term three hundred and fifty times, two hundred and seventy of them in Paul's epistles. In particular, two aspects of New Testament writing were determinative for the western conception of the messiah.

First, early Christian writers attached the word *christos*, the Greek for *mashiah*, to Jesus' name, either as a title or a surname. This usage valorizes *christos* and thereby makes "messiah" seem a revealing and important category and thus a subject to be studied. To be persuaded that this use of the word *christos* itself was pivotal in shaping later understanding, one need simply imagine the consequences for western history, religion, and theology had, for example, "lord," "son of man," or "rabbi" prevailed instead as Jesus' cognomen.

Second, New Testament authors, particularly of the gospels of Matthew and Luke, made the Hebrew scriptures into a harbinger of Jesus' career, suffering, and death. The "promise-fulfillment" motif, which casts Jesus as a foreseen figure, is perhaps the major achievement of New Testament apologetics. Apparently a later development of early Christian writing, the motif is a major focus of neither Paul's letters, the Q source, nor the Gospel of Mark.

It is richly articulated and elaborated in the Gospel of Matthew, particularly in Matthew's distinctive use of fulfillment formulas ("All this happened in order to fulfill what the Lord declared through the prophet . . .") to make various prophetic statements into predictions of Jesus' birth and career. Nearly half of those statements are not predictions about the future but the prophets' comments about Israel's past or their own present. This suggests that the fulfillment formulas and their attached verses are the results of *post facto* choice rather than remnants of an exegetical heritage. As in the *pesher* commentaries in the Dead Sea Scrolls, early Christians sought to ground their current experience in scripture and so read the present into the text.

The ideology for the motif is explicit at Luke 24:13–27. On the road to Emmaeus, two disciples unknowingly encounter the risen Jesus and express their disbelief at his death, which seems to disconfirm their early supposition about him ("But we had been hoping that he was the man to liberate Israel"). Jesus rebukes their lack of perception and claims that his death was predicted in the Hebrew scriptures ("Then he began with Moses and all the prophets and explained to them the passages which referred to himself in every part of the scriptures"). The Hebrew scriptures are thus classified as anterior literature, the messiah's textual antecedent.

The "promise-fulfillment" motif, along with the (conflicting) genealogies devised by Matthew and Luke (Mat. 1:1–17; Luke 3:23–38) embed Jesus in the Hebrew scriptures and forge an indelible continuity between him (and thus the early Christians) and Israel. By naming Jesus *christos*, giving him an Israelite pedigree, and depicting him and

his death as foretold and predetermined, early Christian writers gave the figure of the messiah a diachronic dimension. They situated the messiah's origin not in the present but in Israelite antiquity and thus established the Hebrew scriptures as a sequence of auguries. Reading Scripture became, and to a large extent has remained, an exercise in deciphering and tracing a linear progression of portents. It was not simply, as Paul claimed, that the messiah exhibited a typological similarity to important biblical characters such as Adam. Rather, the messiah was rooted in Israel's past and his appearance could be tracked and plotted, perhaps even calculated, through time. On the model provided by Matthew and Luke, the messiah emerges not as an abrupt response to a contemporary crisis, but as the ultimate fulfillment of centuries of accumulated hope and intensifying expectation, the culmination and completion of an ancient Israelite tradition.

This strategy of representation established an enduring convention of western discourse about the messiah. The model limned by an apologetic use of Scripture was accepted by later scholarship as a literary fact and a historical reality, not only of Scripture itself but also of Israelite and Jewish religion.

The Messiah in Rabbinic Judaism

In contrast to the New Testament, Rabbinic literature did not develop a consistent doctrine of the messiah or his role. The Rabbinic picture of the messiah and his activity varies according to document, time, and Rabbinic authority. In general, Rabbinic literature depicts the messiah as secondary to the major and generative categories of the Rabbinic system.

According to Jacob Neusner, the Mishnah develops a religion of sanctification that has a "teleology without eschatology." Consequently, it lacks a doctrine of "the Messiah."

> In the system of the Mishnah—vast and encompassing as it is—we look in vain for a doctrine of the Messiah. There "messiah" serves as a taxonomic indicator, e.g., distinguishing one type of priest or general from some other. There is no doctrine of the Messiah, coming at the end of time; in the Mishnah's system, matters focus on other issues entirely. Although the figure of a Messiah does appear, when the framers of the Mishnah spoke of "the Messiah," they meant a high priest designated and consecrated to office in a certain way, and not in some other way. The reference to "days of the Messiah" constitutes a conventional division of history at the end time but before the ultimate end. But that category of time plays no consequential role in the teleological framework established within the Mishnah. Accordingly, the Mishnah's framers constructed a system of Judaism in which the entire teleological dimension reached full exposure while hardly invoking the person or functions of a messianic figure of any kind. . . . For the purpose of our inquiry, the main thing is a simple fact, namely, that salvation comes through sanctification. The salvific figure, then becomes an instrument of consecration and so fits into an ahistorical system quite different from the one built around the Messiah.[2]

As the primary heir of levitical religion, the Mishnah offers neither a picture of "the Messiah" nor an articulated religious role for one. Its ahistorical vision does not conceive of a dramatic redemption at the end of time. Rather, through the life of piety and the performance of commandments, Israel restores and enacts the ideal conditions of creation and the Garden of Eden. Since Israel's destiny is to be a "holy people," she fulfills her teleology through sanctification. In the Mishnah, therefore, the performance of commandments does not—and cannot—produce the messiah or cause the messiah to come. The commandments are effective in their own terms and not because of some additional consequence that they generate. The Mishnah's worldview makes the messiah virtually irrelevant to the practice of Judaism, and any notion of the messiah as redeemer must stand essentially outside of the Mishnaic system.

The logic of any religious system disciplines the thought and imagination that take place within it. But it cannot restrain thinking that goes on outside it. Since the Mishnah contains no doctrine or description of the messiah, it could neither shape nor block messianic speculation in later Rabbinic Judaism. Hence, post-Mishnaic Rabbinic texts exhibit a wide range of thinking about the messiah. At one end of the spectrum

of opinion is the view that severs the messiah completely from the exercise of religion. It holds that the messiah will come unexpectedly, when God, not Israel, determines it. Nothing Israel can do will make the messiah appear. A related view is the Rabbinic posture of messianic quietism, which explicitly warns Israel against trying to "force" God's hand in bringing redemption. The following text illustrates (Song of Songs Rabbah 2:7; Neusner, trans.):[3]

> R. Helbo says, ". . . He imposed an oath on Israel not to rebel against the kingdoms and not to force the end, not to reveal its mysteries to the nations of the world, and not to go up from the exile by force."

This passage suggests that God actually imposed on Israel four "oaths" concerning the end, each one requiring Israel to be patient and passive, to await God's decision. It reflects both the desire for redemption and as the concern that something fundamental will be violated if Israel tries to generate it herself. Both of these positions seem to accord with the Mishnah's worldview.

By contrast, a virtual connection between piety and redemption occurs for the first time at Y. Taanit 1:1.

> A. "The oracle concerning Dumah. One is calling to me from Seir, 'Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?'" (Is. 21:11).
> B. The Israelites said to Isaiah, "O our Rabbi, Isaiah, what will come for us out of this night?"
> C. He said to them, "Wait for me, until I can present the question."
> D. Once he had asked the question, he came back to them.
> E. They said to him, "Watchman, what of the night? What did the Guardian of the ages tell you?"
> F. He said to them, "The watchman says, 'Morning comes; and also the night. If you will inquire, inquire; come back again' (Is. 21:12)."
> G. They said to him, "Also the night?"
> H. He said to them, "It is not what you are thinking. But there will be morning for the righteous, and night for the wicked, morning for Israel, and night for idolaters."
> I. They said to him, "When?"
> J. He said to them, "Whenever you want, he too wants [it to be]—if you want it, he wants it."
> K. They said to him, "What is standing in the way?"
> L. He said to them, "Repentance: 'Come back again' (Is. 21:12)."
> M. R. Aha in the name of R. Tanhum b. R. Hiyya, "If Israel repents for one day, forthwith the son of David will come."
> N. "What is the Scriptural basis? 'O that today you would hearken to his voice!' (Ps. 95:7)."
> O. Said R. Levi, "If Israel would keep a single Sabbath in the proper way, forthwith the son of David will come."
> P. "What is the Scriptural basis for this view? 'Moses said, Eat it today, for today is a Sabbath to the Lord; today you will not find it in the field' (Exod. 16:25)."
> Q. "And it says, 'For thus said the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel, "In returning and rest you shall be saved; in quietness and in trust shall be your strength." And you would not' (Is. 30:15)."

As Neusner observes:

> First, the system of religious observance, including study of Torah, is explicitly invoked as having salvific power. Second, the persistent hope of the people for the coming of the Messiah is linked to the system of Rabbinic observance and belief. In this way, the austere program of the Mishnah, with no trace of a promise that the Messiah will come if and when the system is fully realized, finds a new development. A teleology lacking all eschatological dimension here gives way to an explicitly messianic statement that the purpose of the law is to attain Israel's salvation: "If you want it, God wants it too." The one thing Israel commands is its own heart; the power it yet exercises is the power to repent. These suffice. The entire history of humanity will respond to Israel's will, to what happens in Israel's heart and soul. And, with Temple in ruins, repentance can take place only within the heart and mind.[4]

But even this view, which marks a shift from the Mishnah's position, does not give the messiah a role in religious practice. In all Rabbinic texts, the messiah remains subordinate to Torah. He leads Israel to redemption and so is a precursor, but not the redeemer himself. The messiah gathers Israel from exile and leads Israel to judgment, but the judgment itself is performed by God. The subordination of the messiah to God is evident in the varied roles the Talmuds assign to the messiah and the sometimes conflicting description of his tasks. Again, Neusner's research makes the point:

> Like Elijah, the Messiah is forerunner and precursor, but he is hardly an enduring player in the eschatological drama. Only God is. Time and again we shall see that the Messiah refers back to God for instructions on what he is to do. A mark of categorical subordination of the Messiah-theme is the diversity of Messiahs, each with his own story. One Messiah comes out of the line of Joseph, another out of the line of David. Both Messiahs (and others in that same classification, for example, the Messiah who is anointed to be high priest in charge of the army [Deut. 20:2–7, Mishnah-tractate Sotah Chapter Eight]), are mortal and subject to the human condition. One Messiah is murdered, replaced by another. The Messiah, moreover, is subject to the impulse to do evil, like any other man. The Messiah plays a transient role in the eschatological drama. People want the Messiah to come—that is the premise of the stories told in connection with repentance—but that is only because he will inaugurate the eschatological drama, not because, on his own, he will bring the drama to its conclusion. Only God will.[5]

The diversity in Rabbinic messianic thought underscores the persistence of the Mishnaic view: the messiah is not integral to the practice of Judaism.

The essential unrelatedness of the messiah to Judaic piety also is evident in ancient rabbis' inability to craft a consistent position on the messiah's impact on the performance of the halakhah. The following passage illustrates (B. Shab. 151a):

> A. R. Simeon b. Eleazar says, "'. . . and the years draw nigh when you shall say, I have no pleasure in them' (Ec. 12:1)—this refers to the days of the messiah, in which there is neither merit nor guilt."
> B. This differs from what Samuel said, for said Samuel, "The only difference between this world and the days of the messiah is Israel's servitude to the nations of the world. As it is said, 'For the poor will never cease out of the Land' (Deut. 15:11)."

The position ascribed to Simeon b. Eleazar can be understood to mean that in the time of the messiah, the commandments will no longer apply. By contrast, the view attributed to Samuel suggests that religious life after the messiah's arrival will be identical to that before it. Other Rabbinic passages suggest that the days of the messiah will signal the performance of more religious acts, particularly those of the sacrificial cult, than are practiced in this world. The more prevalent view accords with Samuel, and it appears throughout the Judaic literature of antiquity. W.D. Davies' classic study shows that:

> . . . we found in the Old Testament, the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha and in the Rabbinical sources the profound conviction that obedience to the Torah would be a dominant mark of the Messianic age. . . . Generally, our sources revealed the expectation that the Torah in its existing form would persist into the Messianic age when its obscurities would be made plain, and when there would be certain natural adaptations and changes. . . .[6]

That the coming of the messiah does not automatically affect religious practice suggests that there is little systemic relationship between the two in the structure of Judaism.

The diversity in the messiah-theme persisted through the middle ages. Medieval Jewish thinkers held different views about Israel's redemption. Maimonides held a restorative view and envisioned a messiah who, without miracles or wonders, would signal the end of foreign domination of Israel. Nahmanides made the separation between Judaic piety and redemption explicit: "Our Law and Truth and Justice are not dependent upon a Messiah."[7] Alongside these views, however, a series of apocalyptic works appeared, such as *The Book of Zerubbabel*, which offered fantastic visions of the end, including a cosmic battle between a satanic figure named Armilus, who defeats the Messiah ben Joseph but is then defeated by the Messiah ben David. H.H. Ben Sasson observes that Jewish medieval apocalyptic literature is notable for the

> complete absence from it of any doctrinal religious or ideological elements. In these works the future is described as an inevitable end of the world as known and the beginning of a new one. In none of these works is there any explanation as to why anything is going to happen or what a Jew should do to help in the great task of bringing about redemption.[8]

The disconnect between religion and redemption described by Ben Sasson conforms to the basic position of levitical religion.

The Messianic Religion of Shabbetai Sevi

A definitive change from the position of levitical religion occurs in the case of Shabbetai Sevi. His career and the movements that follow him have been described in detail by G. Scholem and only a brief recapitulation is given here.

Shabbetai Sevi is the most famous false messiah in Judaism. Born in Smyrna, educated in Egypt and Jerusalem, he was both brilliant and delusional. His had a strange early career, replete with instances of violating various rules of halakhic behavior. In 1665, he connected with a figure named Nathan of Gaza, who proclaimed him to be the messiah. Nathan was to become the principal interpreter—the Paul—of Shabbateanism.

In the mid-17th century, Lurianic Kabbalah became a powerful ideology that deeply affected the worldview of Jews across Europe and the Mediterranean. It held that there had been a dislocation within the Godhead and that "sparks" of divinity had become lodged in the evil, material world. The performance of commandments released the dislocated sparks to their proper place and moved the cosmos closer to redemption. Unlike Levitical religion, Lurianism thus attributed redemptive power to discrete acts of halakhic conformity. It moreover taught that the process of cosmic restoration was nearly complete and that the final redemption was on the verge of occurring.

Nathan of Gaza shared the Lurianic position and, in May, 1665, declared that Shabbetai Sevi would soon inaugurate the final redemption. At that time, Shabbetai Sevi went to Smyrna and proclaimed himself to be messiah. The announcement created an enormous stir in the Jewish world, and in February, 1666, Shabbetai Sevi was arrested by the Turkish authorities. On September 16, he was brought to the Turkish Sultan, who was staying in Adrianople, and offered the choice of converting to Islam or being beheaded. Shabbetai Sevi chose to convert, for which he received a pension from the Turks.

Nathan of Gaza used Lurianic teaching to make this unprecedented move seem plausible. He claimed that by converting to Islam, Shabbetai Sevi had entered the realm of evil to release the last trapped sparks of divinity and to begin the redemption of the world. The conversion, he insisted, was a subterfuge. It looked like apostasy, but it was really redemption. Although most of the Jewish world rejected this teaching, some groups continued to believe in Shabbetai Sevi after his death in 1676. They developed practices in imitation of him, on the argument that the best way to fulfill the Torah was to violate it. In Europe, a figure named Jacob Frank (1726–1791) formed a Sabbatean group that converted to Roman Catholicism. Another group that converted to Islam.

Lurianic Kabbalah and the Sabbatean movement represent a break with the structure of levitical religion in the claim that the performance of commandments is redemptive and can move Israel closer to redemption. In effect, it shifts responsibility for Israel's redemption from God to Israel. Aspects of this ideology, as we shall see below, appear in modern Lubavitch Hasidism.

The Messiah, "Messianism," and Zionism

With the exception of the Sabbatean movement and some smaller messianic outbreaks, the Rabbinic prohibition against "forcing" the end dominated Jewish thinking about the messiah until the modern period. On this view, the Jewish people was to remain passively in exile and not agitate for redemption. The messiah's arrival was promised, and the Jews were not to doubt the divine plan by their own impatience. This idea of passivity did not preclude the necessity of individual repentance as a precondition to redemption, but it did prohibit the possibility that human political initiative could have a legitimate role in hastening redemption. Throughout the history of Judaism, the "oaths" against forcing the end cited above evoke the abyss between the human, historical and the divine, metaphysical spheres that can only be crossed with the messiah's appearance.

In premodern Judaism, the "oaths" were deemed nonbinding. In modern Hasidic and Western Orthodox thought, however, they appear as a central motif. Aviezer Ravitzky argues that this can be explained by the emergence of Jewish nationalism and Zionism, which challenged Judaism's established posture of passivity in exile.[9]

As we have seen, Judaism is a quintessential religion of exile. Return to the land of Israel, therefore, signaled a systemic change, a decisive alteration in Israel's condition. That is why in the modern age the messianic question acquires a unique urgency in the history of Judaism. New trends in European thought and emerging historical realities—both of which influenced Judaism—exposed the ideological tensions inherent in the history of Jewish thinking about the messiah. The physical return to the Land of Israel may have been redemption for secular Jews, but it was a problem for many Jewish—particularly Orthodox—religious thinkers.

Modern European Nationalism and the Beginnings of Zionism

Influenced by nineteenth century European struggles for national sovereignty and "receptiveness to innovation," two Orthodox thinkers argued for a significant reassessment of classical Jewish passivity. Rabbi Judah Alkalai (Serbia, d. 1878) and Rabbi Zvi Hirsch Kalischer (Prussia, d. 1874), developed an activist and worldly idea of redemption. Known as the "Harbingers of Zionism," these rabbis and their followers imagined redemption to be a utopian process of gradual realization, rather than the sudden, complete realization of their contemporaries. Thus, they advocated gradual immigration and agricultural settlement of the land of Israel as a "necessary and organic step toward full redemption."

The Harbingers derived textual support from a distinctive reading of classical Jewish literature. They distinguished between the "messianic process" and the "messianic goal," the former to be made manifest in worldly, historical terms the latter to burst forth in the sudden, miraculous coming of the messiah. This imagery is based on classical sources in which the redemptive, metaphysical messiah—the Messiah ben David—is thought to follow the appearance of an historical messiah—the Messiah ben Joseph—associated with the last great, apocalyptic battles. Thus the Harbingers focused on a classical tension between history and redemption using the figure of Messiah ben Joseph as proof that historical initiative has a legitimate role in collective redemption. The Harbingers were among the first representatives of a new activist conception of redemption in which human initiative and political, historical developments could have real implications for the coming of the messiah.

The Harbingers provoked criticism from contemporary Jewish thinkers for breaking with the traditional commitment to Jewish quietism. Many Orthodox thinkers found problematic the idea that the Jews' political and social activism could be ways of advancing what previously had been seen as a plan for the world in God's hands alone, and therefore religiously meaningful. Rabbi Isaac Jacob Reines (who laid down the ideological foundations of the Mizrachi [religious-Zionist] movement) developed the most articulate arguments against the ideology of the Harbingers. Reines objected to the Harbingers' distinction between "messianic process" and "messianic goal" on the grounds that redemption was to be achieved solely though supernatural means. He acknowledges the religious value of settling the land, because it seeks to improve the living circumstances of the Jewish community. But it must not be confused with actual metaphysical redemption, which he understood in its traditional utopian mold. Reines cautiously affirms the settlement of the land, but denies that such historical developments have anything to do with the Jewish people's redemption. Still, even his moderate stance in certain respects would have facilitated the emergence of a contemporary Zionist messianism, since it allows religious settlers to cooperate with secular pioneers. These religious traditionalists thus could participate in a utopian social and political movement without fear of violating the traditional prohibition against forcing the End.

The possibility of maintaining such a

moderate ideology, however, was doomed to failure. The agent of this failure was the explosive confrontation between traditional understandings of Jewish messianism and the emergence of organized Zionism. Zionism sought to achieve partial salvation in the present through human, political initiative. Moreover, Zionist leaders aimed to reconstitute Jewish nationhood under a secular banner. Both Zionism and traditional messianism sought to end the exile from the land of Israel, cultivate the land, and achieve the social reform of the Jewish people. Transcending these commonalties were irreducible differences of opinion about the meaning of these goals. Ultimately, a moderate stance was too fragile to survive the volatile mix of ideological similarities and differences. Over time, extreme schools of Jewish religious thought developed in direct response to the Zionist challenge. Reines' moderate ideology was replaced by radical anti-Zionism and religious Zionism. Both movements employ a utopian model of redemption, but they interpret the meaning of the Zionist endeavor (and the Holocaust) in radically different ways.

The majority of Orthodox leaders condemned Zionism from its beginnings. At first, their critique focused mainly on the secular character of the movement and its leaders and on the unrealistic, impractical nature of the endeavor. But the challenge Zionism presented to traditional ideas about the nature of collective Jewish redemption became the central motif in anti-Zionist criticism. In 1899, the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Shalom Dov Baer Schneersohn, laid the ideological ground of this ultra-Orthodox critique of Zionism. He argued that Zionism is essentially opposed to the classical Jewish messianism because it sought to bring about the redemption of the Jewish people through ordinary human political initiative rather than through the supernatural and miraculous arrival of the messiah. Instead of attempting to force the end of history through impatient and arrogant politics, the Jewish people ought to remain in exile, passively waiting for the eschaton to arrive by metaphysical means.

Schneersohn argued that redemption must be sudden and complete (the utopian model). But secularization is comprehensive and therefore blocks precondition of the messiah's arrival: the total realization of a repentant world. Jewish identity is intrinsically bound up with a traditional messianic commitment to passivity. To achieve a Jewish nation, the Zionists must erode Jewish identity. Thus Schneersohn conceives of Zionism as unavoidably opposed to authentic Jewish religion. Within this ideological context the passivity in exile is transformed from a persistent Rabbinic theme into a normative article of faith. Only in confrontation with Zionism—a modern ideology—does the fear of forcing the End achieve normative stature and centrality. After Schneersohn, this theological critique becomes the primary theme in the radical critique of Zionism.

Schneersohn may have been the first to articulate an anti-Zionist ideology, but Rabbi Moshe Teitelbaum, the Satmar Rebbe, produced a comprehensive theory of anti-Zionism. For Teitelbaum, Zionism is the anti-messianic work of Satan himself. Indeed the improbable success of Zionism is proof of its satanic assistance, for only with the aid of Satan could the antimessianic Zionists overcome the inherent holiness of the land of Israel. In this view, the state is *de facto* destructive. The very fact of its existence, and not its policies, is the problem. Not even the passage of religious laws ("Torah legislation") can ameliorate the secular nature of the state, such that any active participation or influence in Israeli government indirectly legitimates a corrupt, heretical entity. The only proper response to the fact of the state is criticism and protest from a distance.

But not all Orthodox thinkers cleaved to the theology of passivity. Some were able to completely rethink the inherited messianic ideal to create a sort of messianism that makes sense of their own experiences and desires, particularly in the settling of the land. This competing school of thought sees the Zionist project as a legitimate first step in the divine *process* of redemption. The ideological founder of religious Zionism, Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook, interpreted Zionism not as a manifestation of human arrogance and impatience but as the latest symbol of God's concern for the Jewish people and

the beginning of a new, post-exilic phase in Jewish history devoid of historical passivity. Religious Zionism attempts to close the gap set up between historical and messianic reality in traditional Jewish imagination. It positions the state of Israel within the ongoing march toward collective redemption and interprets the Zionist project in the traditional religious categories of sin, repentance, and redemption.

Religious Zionist ideology is essentially messianism in the temporal absence of a personal savior. It is "messianism without a messiah." It holds that human collective action begins the process of redemption, and the messiah will appear to conclude and mature this process. Thus redemption is a process, a series of steps leading to eventual redemption conceived in traditional utopian terms, but in which human action has a legitimate role to play.

The question of human initiative in the advent of the messianic age has classical origins. The Kabbalistic teachers "taught the messianic redemption was the collective responsibility of the fellowship or community as a whole." These mystics understood the messiah's arrival as the culmination of a process of collective repentance. Human spiritual purification was the precondition of the messiah's arrival. The religious Zionists added to this classical understanding by seeing religious meaning in political, historical developments. Thus, their ideology attempts to fuse the political and the theological; the image of the Jewish state is that of a fully integrated "theopolitical whole." As it reshapes classical Jewish thinking about the messiah, religious Zionism creates a modern Jewish messianism that works in categories foreign to the Christian ideologies that constitute the established western perception of what the messiah is about.

Due to their dialectical understanding of history and progress, Kook and his followers, are able to maintain their optimism even in the face of what may appear to be national disappointment. The religious Zionists—grounded in Kook's dialectic—interpret social, political, military, and cultural upheaval and revolution as integral elements of the determined march towards redemption. Kook's son and ideological heir, Rabbi Zvi Yehudah Kook (1891–1981), voices this interpretative tendency in his treatment of the Holocaust. He sees the destruction of European Jewry as the necessary expurgation of a wretched, Jewish culture of exile. The Holocaust proves to be a "kind of shattering, the destruction of a rotten culture (that of exile) for the sake of national rebirth and the fulfillment of the vision of the revealed End."

The elder Kook interprets the actions of secular Zionist pioneers through his dialectic perspective. They represent an unconscious movement towards repentance, and the return to the land—even for apparently secular reasons—can be affirmed as the beginning of a process in which eventually all Jews in the land will realize their inner, religious nature and live according to the dictates of the Torah and the halakhah. Utopian redemption will ultimately arrive in the form of the messiah when the secularists consciously turn to a purification of their ways and affirm the relevance and authority of traditional Torah Judaism.[10] This interpretation allows Kook and his ideological brethren to assimilate seemingly objectionable elements of the state. What might be construed as apostasy becomes in the hands of the religious Zionists one more integral and necessary challenge on the inevitable road to messianic redemption.

It should be noted that messianic determinism—the belief that redemption is the inevitable end of human history—does not necessarily preclude human responsibility. Although the elder Kook finds religious and messianic significance in the objective historical development of the state, he nevertheless affirms that redemption is not possible until the Jewish people take full responsibility for their own spiritual repentance. Thus, Kook maintains a seemingly delicate position: The End is inevitably on hand, but ultimate redemption does not annul human responsibility, it requires it.[11]

Religious determinism in both the radical anti-Zionist and religious Zionist camps reveals that the fundamental conflict revolves around the "essence" of the Zionist enterprise. Neither school of thought believes in partial redemption. The redemption of the Jewish people will be utopian: sudden and

complete. The legitimacy of Zionism does not depend on Israeli social and political reality. For the anti-Zionists and religious Zionists, the question of Zionism ultimately rests on their distinctive understandings of the relationship between human initiative and divine revelation.

The Lubavitch Hasidic Movement—A Contemporary Case of Acute Messianism

The Hasidic sect known as Habad Lubavitch maintains an extraordinarily public image in the Jewish world. This is largely due to its ability to harness the cultural and technological elements of modernity for the propagation of its traditional religious message.[12] Apart from this extraordinary feature, the Habad movement also presents a cogent illustration of the effect the Zionist movement has had on traditional messianic ideologies.

Earlier generations of Habad leadership refrained from speaking on the possibility of collective messianic redemption and chose instead to focus on the nature of individual redemption.[13] Yet today, the Habad movement is characterized by extraordinarily explicit messianic discourse and fervor. The key historical factor in this transformation has been the emergence and relative success of Zionism.

That Zionism should have transformed the self-understanding of Habad so significantly is ironic if we recall that a Habad Rebbe, Shalom Dov Baer Schneersohn, was among the most virulent opponents of Zionism, rejecting outright its legitimacy and authority on traditional theological grounds. Yet the pending destruction of European Jewry prompted a later Habad Rebbe, Joseph Isaac Schneersohn, to publicly yearn for the coming of the messiah. His declaration that redemption was approaching was derived from the collective experience of his followers, the suffering brought on by the systematic destruction of the Holocaust. Rabbi Joseph Isaac, amid the reality of the Holocaust, did not interpret it as punishment for Zionist agitation or as the divine removal of an accursed exile culture. He drew on classical Jewish sources and saw the Holocaust as the "birth pangs" of redemption, the advent of unendurable suffering thought to precede the messianic age.[14]

Under the leadership of the most recent Lubavitcher Rebbe, Menachem Mendel Schneersohn, this messianic fervor reached its most fevered pitch. Unlike Joseph Isaac, who called out for redemption in the wake of profound suffering, Menachem Mendel affirmed a "messianism of prosperity." He interpreted historical events such as the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the cold war as explicit indications that the world was moving closer to full observance of the Noachide laws and thus cosmic redemption was approaching.[15]

Yet this messianism of prosperity obviously requires constant stimuli to maintain its optimism, and the history of contemporary Habad shows that this is precisely what has occurred. At the end of Passover in April, 1991, Menachem Mendel confessed to his followers that he had expended all of his spiritual energy and that the arrival of the coming messiah rested on their individual repentance. On Shabbat Pinhas, July 6, 1991, the Rebbe aroused even greater emotional fervor when he discussed the coming messiah more explicitly than ever before. Lastly, to further elevate the emotional frenzy, Habad followers began to speak of their Rebbe in terms traditionally reserved for the messiah.[16] After the death of the Lubavitcher Rebbe in July, 1994, some of his followers began to assert that he is the messiah. In the fall, 1996, the Israeli Weekly *Sihat HaGeullah* revised the standard messianist slogan to read: "May our Master, Teacher, and Creator (instead of 'Rabbi'), the King Messiah live forever." A number of other Lubavitch publications suggested that the Rebbe should be the focus of prayers.

While the belief that the Rebbe is the messiah seems limited to particular circles within Lubavitch Hasidism and cannot be said to reflect the ideology of the entire movement, the messianism associated with Habad has been criticized as a new form of Zionist activism. Fixating on the messianic question and engaging in prayer and repentance with the explicit expectation of

bringing about the messiah appeared to some in the Haredi community as an example of forcing the End.[17] The new and dramatic claim that the Rebbe is the Messiah also has generated charges of heresy, because the focus on the Rebbe as, for example, "our Creator" seems to alter the form and basis of Judaism. However, despite some controversy over this issue, Lubavitch Hasidism retains its legitimacy within the larger Judaic world. The radical messianic declarations of some of its members have not been seen to push Habad beyond the pale.

Conclusion

Judaism is grounded in the experience of exile. Ancient Jews, certain that they were God's people always, drew creatively on their Israelite culture and heritage to develop two major responses to the twin challenges of national dislocation and chronic political oppression. The first was the hope for an ideal national leader—often, but not always, from the royal Davidic dynasty—whose work could range from leading the people home to an ideal kingdom to the establishment of a new cosmic order. The idea of "the messiah," an individual savior or redeemer of Israel, derives from this conception. The second response was the establishment of levitical religion, a system of ethics and piety that both maintained and manifested the distinctive relationship between Israel and God. Although initially centered around the Temple and its cult, levitical religion—particularly as adapted and transformed by Rabbinic Judaism—could be performed anywhere.

These two responses are not mutually exclusive, but they are systemically independent of one another. Neither requires the other. Judaism is an extension of levitical religion. The idea of an individual messiah existed alongside, but was never fully integrated into, the levitical system of ethics and piety that constituted the core of Rabbinic Judaism. Structurally, Judaism does not require a messiah to justify fulfilling the commandments. Indeed, a persistent strain of Rabbinic teaching holds that the commandments will apply after the messiah appears. Despite references to the restored Jerusalem and future heir of David, the synagogue liturgy celebrates God, not the messiah, as Israel's redeemer and looks forward to the restoration of the Temple cult. Except for Sabbateanism and the forms of religion that emerge from it, there is no assumption that the commandments are performed to make the messiah arrive.

Because the category of the messiah is extrinsic to the system of Jewish religious practice, it is subject to speculation. In the varied forms Judaism has taken over time, there was and remains a wide range of opinions about what the messiah will be and do. These opinions in themselves do not constitute grounds for separation from Judaism. The figure of the messiah surely is present in Jewish religious imagination, but hope for the messiah's arrival is not the driving force of Jewish religious life. Modern and contemporary developments in Zionism and the State of Israel have posed fresh questions to the classical view. How these will be answered still remains to be seen.

William Scott Green
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Notes

[1] This analysis relies on Shemaryahu Talmon, "The Concepts of Masiah and Messianism in Early Judaism," in J.H. Charlesworth, ed., *The Messiah* (Minneapolis, 1992), pp. 79–115. The cited words are on p. 106.

[2] William Scott Green and Jacob Neusner, *The Messiah in Ancient Judaism* (Atlanta, 1999).

[3] Also see B. Ket. 111a.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Ibid.

[6] W.D. Davies, *Torah in the Messianic Age and/or the Age to Come* (Philadelphia, 1952), pp. 64–66, 84.

[7] H.H. Ben Sasson, "Messianic Movements," in *Encyclopedia Judaica*, vol. 11, col. 1263.

[8] Ibid., vol. 11, col. 1413.

[9] Aviezer Ravitzky, *Messianism, Zionism, and Jewish Religious Radicalism* (Chicago, 1996). This section is based on Ravitsky's research.

[10] Ibid., pp. 112–113.

[11] Ibid., p. 130.

[12] Ibid., p. 182.

[13] Ibid., pp. 193–194.

[14] Ibid., p. 195.

[15] Ibid., p. 197.

[16] Ibid., p. 197.

[17] Ibid., p. 201.

Messiah in Rabbinic Judaism

THROUGHOUT the Oral Torah the main point of the theological eschatology—the theory of last things—registers both negatively and affirmatively. Death does not mark the end of the individual human life, nor exile the last stop in the journey of Holy Israel. Israelites will live in the age or the world to come, all Israel in the Land of Israel; and Israel will comprehend all who know the one true God. The restoration of world order that completes the demonstration of God's justice encompasses both private life and the domain of all Israel. For both restorationist theology provides eternal life; to be Israel means to live. So far as the individual is concerned, beyond the grave, at a determinate moment, man [1] rises from the grave in resurrection, [2] is judged, and [3] enjoys the world to come. For the entirety of Israel, congruently: all Israel participates in the resurrection, which takes place in the Land of Israel, and enters the world to come.

Restorationist eschatology flows from the same cogent logic that operates throughout Rabbinic Judaism. The last things are to be known from the first. In the just plan of creation man was meant to live in Eden, and Israel in the Land of Israel in time without end. The restoration will bring about that long and tragically-postponed perfection of the world order, sealing the demonstration of the justice of God's plan for creation. Risen from the dead, having atoned through death, man will be judged in accord with his deeds. Israel for its part, when it repents and conforms its will to God's, recovers its Eden. So the consequences of rebellion and sin having been overcome, the struggle of man's will and God's word having been resolved, God's original plan will be realized at the last. The simple, global logic of the system, with its focus on the world order of justice established by God but disrupted by man, leads inexorably to this eschatology of restoration, the restoration of balance, order, proportion—eternity.

The two principal components of the Oral Torah's theology of last things—[1] resurrection and judgment, [2] the world to come and eternal life—as laid out in the several documents do not fit together seamlessly. In general, it would appear, the theology arranges matters in categorical sequence, individual, then community. First comes the resurrection of individuals, and, with it, judgment of individuals one by one. Then, those chosen for life having been identified, "the world to come" takes place, and that final restoration of perfection, involving all Israel in place of Adam, lasts forever. Israel forms the cohort of those chosen for life, and Israelites are restored to life in the Land of Israel. That sequence suggests a single, uninterrupted narrative of last things, while in general, passages that concern themselves with resurrection do not ordinarily join together with composites that deal with the world to come. While mutually complementary, each of the two components of eschatology in the Oral Torah bears its distinctive focus.

The absolute given, a logical necessity of a theology revealing God's justice, maintains that individual life goes forward from this world, past the grave, to the world to come, and people are both judged and promised eternal life. That is a necessary doctrine for a system that insists upon the rationality and order of the universe under God's rule. It is easy to understand the urgency of resurrection; without judgment and eternal life for the righteous, this world's imbalance cannot be righted, nor can God's justice be revealed. Monotheism without an eschatology of judgment and the world to come leaves unresolved the tensions inherent in the starting point: God is one, God is just. That is why the starting point of the theology dictates its conclusion: the deeds one does in this world bear consequences for his situation in the world to come, and the merit attained through this-worldly-deeds, e.g., of generosity, persists; individuals retain their status as such through all time to come.

The Messiah and Repentance

Once we ask about how repentance forms a principal requirement for the restoration of life over death, in resurrection, and the restoration of Israel over its condition of exile and alienation, turn to the place of repentance in the end of the world as it now is. We begin with the figure of the Messiah, an important motif in all discussions of matters of eschatology: the resurrection of the dead, the advent of the world or age to come. We already realize that Israel's repentance is a precondition for salvation, hence for the coming of the Messiah. We should not find surprising, then, that the characterization of the Messiah should stress his humility, as much as the promise of his coming to raise the dead should rest upon Israel's conduct as well.

For the theology of the Oral Torah delivers in diverse ways its single, fundamental messages concerning world order attained through humility before God. In the present instance the theology takes up the Messiah-theme to make its statement. It says, the true Messiah will be humble, and the false Messiah will be marked as false by his arrogance toward God. What we already have learned about repentance in the Oral Torah has made inevitable—indeed urgent—that very odd juxtaposition, the contrapuntal relationship of arrogance and repentance, sinfulness and reconciliation. Here is how the false Messiah shows why he cannot save Israel, and in so many words, it is because of his blasphemous arrogance (Lamentations Rabbah LVIII:ii.8ff.):

> 4.A. Rabbi would interpret the verse, "There shall come forth a star out of Jacob" (Num. 24:17) in this way: "Do not read the letters of the word for 'star' as 'star' but as 'deceit.'"
> 5.A. When R. Aqiba saw Bar Koziba, he said, "This is the royal messiah."
> B. R. Yohanan b. Torta said to him, "Aqiba, grass will grow from your cheeks and he will still not have come."

We are now told why Aqiba is wrong:

> 7.A. Eighty thousand trumpeters besieged Betar. There Bar Koziba was encamped, with two hundred thousand men with an amputated finger.
> B. Sages sent word to him, saying, "How long are you going to produce blemished men in Israel?"
> C. He said to them, "And what shall I do to examine them [to see whether or not they are brave]?"
> D. They said to him, "Whoever cannot uproot a cedar of Lebanon do not enroll in your army."
> E. He had two hundred thousand men of each sort [half with an amputated finger, half proved by uprooting a cedar].

Now comes the explicit statement of the false Messiah's arrogance toward Heaven:

> 8.A. When they went out to battle, he would say, "Lord of all ages, don't help us and don't hinder us!"
> B. That is in line with this verse: "Have you not, O God, cast us off? And do not go forth, O God, with our hosts" (Ps. 60:12).

It would be difficult to find a passage more directly opposed to sages' fundamental theological convictions than Bar Kokhba's explicit rejection of God's help in favor of his own strength.

Now a separate story underscores the unsuitable character of this particular Messiah, namely, the mark of arrogance represented by temper. Losing one's temper is a mark of arrogance toward Heaven, and here Bar Kokhba does just that:

> 10.A. For three and a half years Hadrian besieged Betar.
> B. R. Eleazar the Modiite was sitting in sack cloth and ashes, praying, and saying, "Lord of all the ages, do not sit in judgment today, do not sit in judgment today."
> C. Since [Hadrian] could not conquer the place, he considered going home.
> D. There was with him a Samaritan, who said to him, "My lord, as long as that old cock wallows in ashes, you will not conquer the city.
> E. "But be patient, and I shall do something so you can conquer it today."

The first act is one of gossip:

> F. He went into the gate of the city and found R. Eleazar standing in prayer.
> G. He pretended to whisper something into his ear, but the other paid no attention to him.

From slander the conspiracy turns to false witness, taking God's name in vain:

H. People went and told Bar Koziba, "Your friend wants to betray the city."
I. He sent and summoned the Samaritan and said to him, "What did you say to him?"
J. He said to him, "If I say, Caesar will kill me, and if not, you will kill me. Best that I kill myself and not betray state secrets."

The false Messiah proved a false judge as well, rejecting even the testimony in his hands and the plea of the honest sage:

K. Nonetheless, Bar Koziba reached the conclusion that he wanted to betray the city.
L. When R. Eleazar had finished his prayer, he sent and summoned him, saying to him, "What did this one say to you?"
M. He said to him, "I never saw that man."
N. He kicked him and killed him.
O. At that moment an echo proclaimed: "Woe to the worthless shepherd who leaves the flock, the sword shall be upon his arm and upon his right eye" (Zech. 11:17).
P. Said the Holy One, blessed be He, "You have broken the right army of Israel and blinded their right eye. Therefore your arm will wither and your eye grow dark."
Q. Forthwith Betar was conquered and Ben Koziba was killed.

That God has responded to the arrogance of the Messiah is now underscored. On his own, Hadrian could have accomplished nothing. It was God who killed the Messiah, not Hadrian:

R. They went, carrying his head to Hadrian. He said, "Who killed this one?"
S. They said, "One of the Goths killed him," but he did not believe them.
T. He said to them, "Go and bring me his body."
U. They went to bring his body and found a snake around the neck.
V. He said, "If the God of this one had not killed him, who could have vanquished him?"
W. That illustrates the following verse of Scripture: "If their Rock had not given them over. . . ." (Deut. 32:30).

The same attitude is set forth in a further story of the arrogance of the army of the Messiah, which repeated the Messiah's plea to heaven, Let him not help us nor hinder us, and which was defeated not by Hadrian's army but by God:

19.A. There were two brothers in Kefar Haruba, and no Roman could pass by there, for they killed him.
B. They decided, "The whole point of the thing is that we must take the crown and put it on our head and make ourselves kings."
C. They heard that the Romans were coming to fight them.
D. They went out to do battle, and an old man met them and said, "May the Creator be your help against them."
E. They said, "Let him not help us nor hinder us!"
F. Because of their sins, they went forth and were killed.
G. They went, carrying his head to Hadrian. He said, "Who killed this one?"
H. They said, "One of the Goths killed him," but he did not believe them.
I. He said to them, "Go and bring me his body."
J. They went to bring his body and found a snake around the neck.
K. He said, "If the God of this one had not killed him, who could have vanquished him?"
L. That illustrates the following verse of Scripture: "If their Rock had not given them over. . . ." (Deut. 32:30).

Arrogance toward God, rather than repentance and remorse, thus characterize the false Messiah. If, then, Israel wants to bring about the restoration, whether the individual to life or Israel to the Land, it will accomplish repentance.

That view is expressed in the statement that when Israel really wants the Messiah to come, he will come. But we are now aware of the special weight attached to the word, "want" or "will." What Israel must want is only what God wants. What Israel must do is give up any notion of accomplishing on its own, by its own act of will, the work of redemption. It is only through the self-abnegation of repentance that Israel can accomplish its goal. Specifically, when Israel's will conforms to the will of God, then God will respond to the act of repentance by bringing about the time of restoration and eternal life. This is expressed in a colloquy that announces, the Messiah will come when all Israel keeps a single Sabbath. And that will take place when Israel wants it to take place. It requires only an act of will on the part of Israel to accept one of

the Ten Commandments. Then in a broader restatement of matters, the entire redemptive process is made to depend upon Israel's repentance (Y. Ta. 1:1 II:5):

G. The Israelites said to Isaiah, "O our Rabbi, Isaiah, What will come for us out of this night?"
H. He said to them, "Wait for me, until I can present the question."
I. Once he had asked the question, he came back to them.
J. They said to him, "Watchman, what of the night? What did the Guardian of the ages say [a play on 'of the night' and 'say']?"
K. He said to them, "The watchman says: 'Morning comes; and also the night. [If you will inquire, inquire; come back again]'" (Is. 21:12).
L. They said to him, "Also the night?"
M. He said to them, "It is not what you are thinking. But there will be morning for the righteous, and night for the wicked, morning for Israel, and night for idolaters."

Now comes the main point in the exchange: when will this happen? It will happen when Israel wants. And what is standing in the way is Israel's arrogance, to be atoned for by Israel's remorseful repentance:

N. They said to him, "When?"
O. He said to them, "Whenever you want, He too wants [it to be]—if you want it, he wants it."
P. They said to him, "What is standing in the way?"
Q. He said to them, "Repentance: 'come back again'" (Is. 21:12).

This is stated in the clearest possible way: one day will do it.

R. R. Aha in the name of R. Tanhum b. R. Hiyya, "If Israel repents for one day, forthwith the son of David will come.
S. "What is the scriptural basis? 'O that today you would hearken to his voice!'" (Ps. 95:7).

Now comes the introduction of the Sabbath as a test case:

T. Said R Levi, "If Israel would keep a single Sabbath in the proper way, forthwith the son of David will come.
U. "What is the scriptural basis for this view? 'Moses said, Eat it today, for today is a Sabbath to the Lord; [today you will not find it in the field]' (Exod. 16:25).
V. "And it says, '[For thus said the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel], 'In returning and rest you shall be saved; [in quietness and in trust shall be your strength.' And you would not]'" (Is. 30:15). By means of returning and [Sabbath] rest you will be redeemed.

The main point, then, is the linkage of repentance to the coming restoration of Israel to the Land, the dead to life, by the Messiah. But the advent of the Messiah depends wholly upon Israel's will. If Israel will subordinate its will to God's, all else will follow.

We recall that, to hasten Israel's repentance, God promises to abrogate those conditions of prosperity that bring about excessive confidence in one's own power and therefore nurture arrogance. The Messiah will come when all Israel will keep a single Sabbath. The matter therefore depends upon Israel's own conduct, which expresses Israel's attitude and will. What is required therefore is repentance, an act of humility that removes the consequences of arrogance. Now the tribulations that accompany the Messiah are placed into the context of Israel's conduct, rather than world history, and the point appears to be, if Israel suffers, it will repent, and when it repents, God will respond with love and bring the age to come. Accordingly, the Messiah will come at the right time, which is when Israel is in greatest need of his advent. The preconditions for the coming of the Messiah, God's response to Israel's repentance, are described variously, and the calculations to decipher events prove even more diverse. But the generative conviction that repentance and that alone will bring about the restoration accounts for the systematic speculation on the tribulations that will accompany the advent of the Messiah (B. San. 11:1 I.81–2, 87, 90–92, 97/96b–97a):

I.81 A. Said R. Nahman to R. Isaac, "Have you heard when the son of 'the fallen one' will come?"
B. He said to him, "Who is the son of 'the fallen one'?"
C. He said to him, "It is the Messiah."
D. "Do you call the Messiah 'the son of the fallen one'?"
E. He said to him, "Yes, for it is written, 'On that day I will raise up

[97A] the tabernacle of David, the fallen one' (Amos 9:11)."

A mark of tribulation will be the suffering of the sages, among all Israel.

F. He said to him, "This is what R. Yohanan said, 'The generation to which the son of David will come will be one in which disciples of sages grow fewer,
G. "'and, as to the others, their eyes will wear out through suffering and sighing,
H. "'and troubles will be many, and laws harsh, forever renewing themselves so that the new one will hasten onward before the old one has come to an end.'"

The world of nature will conspire to bring Israelite repentance:

I.82 A. Our rabbis have taught on Tannaite authority:
B. The seven year cycle in which the son of David will come:
C. As to the first one, the following verse of Scripture will be fulfilled: "And I will cause it to rain upon one city and not upon another" (Amos 4:7).
D. As to the second year, the arrows of famine will be sent forth.
E. As to the third, there will be a great famine, in which men, women, and children will die, pious men and wonder-workers alike, and the Torah will be forgotten by those that study it.
F. As to the fourth year, there will be plenty which is no plenty.
G. As to the fifth year, there will be great prosperity, and people will eat, drink, and rejoice, and the Torah will be restored to those that study it.
H. As to the sixth year, there will be rumors.
I. As to the seventh year, there will be wars.
J. As to the end of the seventh year [the eighth year], the son of David will come.
K. Said R. Joseph, "Lo, how many seven-year-cycles have passed like that one, and yet he has not come."
L. Said Abbayye, "Were there rumors in the sixth year and wars in the seventh year? And furthermore, did they come in the right order?"

Israel's own situation will reach the nadir, with few disciples, no cash, and many traitors; people will give up hope of redemption. Then, in a state of desperation, they may repent:

I.87 A. Our rabbis have taught on Tannaite authority:
B. "For the Lord shall judge his people and repent himself of his servants, when he sees that their power has gone, and there is none shut up or left" (Deut. 32:36).
C. The son of David will come only when traitors are many.
D. Another matter: Only when disciples are few.
E. Another matter: Only when a penny will not be found in anyone's pocket.
F. Another matter: Only when people will have given up hope of redemption, as it is said, "There is none shut up or left" (Deut. 32:36), as it were, when there is none [God being absent] who supports and helps Israel.
G. That accords with the statement of R. Zira, who, when he would find rabbis involved in [figuring out when the Messiah would come], would say to them, 'By your leave, I ask you not to put it off.
H. "For we have learned on Tannaite authority: Three things come on the spur of the moment, and these are they: the Messiah, a lost object, and a scorpion."

Above all, the arrogant will die out in Israel, and that is the point at which repentance can take place for the entire community of Israel:

I.97 A. Said R. Hanina, "The son of David will come only when a fish will be sought for a sick person and not be found, as it is said, 'Then I will make their waters deep and cause their rivers to run like oil' (Ez. 32:14), and it is written, 'In that day I will cause the horn of the house of Israel to sprout forth' (Ez. 29:21)."
B. Said R. Hama bar Hanina, "The son of David will come only when the rule over Israel by the least of the kingdoms will come to an end, as it is said, 'He shall both cut off the springs with pruning hooks and take away and cut down the branches' (Is. 18:5), and further: 'In that time shall the present be brought to the Lord of hosts of a people that is scattered and peeled' (Is. 18:7)."

In constructions on when the Messiah comes, the issue of arrogance arises quite regularly, and in the next two entries, is explicit:

> C. Said Zeiri said R. Hanina, "The son of David will come only when arrogant people will no longer be [found] in Israel, as it is said, 'For then I will take away out of the midst of you those who rejoice in your pride' (Zeph. 8:11), followed by: 'I will also leave in the midst of you an afflicted and poor people, and they shall take refuge in the name of the Lord' (Zeph. 3:12)."
> D. Said R. Simlai in the name of R. Eliezer b. R. Simeon, "The son of David will come only when all judges and rulers come to an end in Israel, as it is said, 'And I will turn my hand upon you and purely purge away your dross and take away all your tin, and I will restore your judges as at the first' (Is. 1:25–26)."

Clearly, little thought about the resolution of the crisis in which Israel finds itself takes place without addressing the issue of repentance, and that issue is commonly framed in terms of arrogance. These formulations express in detail the principal theological doctrine that relates world order to the struggle of God's and Israel's conflicting wills.

But God's other paramount trait, mercy, complementing his justice, will then make its entry. Consistent with the emphasis on the tribulations that will bring about repentance and consequent redemption, a necessary doctrine of God's mercy is restated in this very context. It is that God will ultimately forgive Israel when Israel throws itself on God's mercy. Israel's repentance will assuredly evoke God's response of mercy and forbearance, which is to say, an equal and balanced response:

The Messiah and the Resurrection of the Dead

What of the Messiah in Judaic eschatology? The Messiah figures at every point in the categorical structure of the Oral Torah's eschatological thinking: [1] troubles attendant upon the coming of the Messiah, which either do or do not bring about [2] Israelite repentance, leading to [3] resurrection, and a task then to be performed [4] inaugurating the world to come. But, though the Messiah-theme proves important in the two free-standing eschatological categories (resurrection, world to come) and forms a presence in the third (repentance), on its own account the Messiah-theme simply does not coalesce into an autonomous category. That theme certainly does not define a categorical imperative in the way that Israel and the gentiles, complementarity and correspondence, and the eschatological categories, sin and atonement, resurrection and the world to come, all do. By contrast, to take a specific case, the gentiles and idolatry encompass a broad range of data, interact with other categories, form a focus of thought and a logical center; but they cannot then be reduced to some other categories, e.g., Israel and the Torah, private life, repentance. For its part the Messiah-theme forms a subset of several categories and by itself does not take up an autonomous presence in the theology of the Oral Torah. The Messiah-theme fits into the primary categories *but is itself divisible among them.*

So if the principal components of the Oral Torah's eschatological theology turn out to be Israel in its two dimensions, private and public, what of that individual who figures prominently, but not consistently or in a single coherent role, in all eschatological discourse? The Messiah-theme figures in spelling out the power of repentance.

If Israel repents, the Messiah will come. A Messiah who exhibits inappropriate characteristics—arrogance in place of humility that is the requirement of salvation—embodies the anti-Messiah. So the Messiah exemplifies what is required. But what the Messiah actually does, as distinct from what his advent signifies, is hardly clear in the setting of repentance. When it comes to resurrection, on the one side, and the world to come, on the other, the figure of the Messiah again plays its part. But while the doctrine of resurrection and the one of the world to come encompass in each case a few simple and coherent principles, when it comes to the Messiah matters prove otherwise.

Not only is there no categorical imperative identified with the Messiah-theme. There also is no logic that affords structure and system to that theme, no Rabbinic Messiology,

in the way in which, as we have seen, there certainly is a Rabbinic theological anthropology (for one example). Not only so, but, as the structure of the theology of the Oral Torah has gradually taken shape in these pages, we have recognized that each category—Israel and the Torah, gentiles and idolatry, for instance—claims its place in the larger system, and, as we have seen time and again, denied a place, and a particular order in the larger sequence of categories, a necessary category can render the entire system null. To make the point in the simplest possible way: we cannot imagine a Christianity without (a) Christology. Here we have a Judaism in which the Messiah-theme in the eschatological framework takes on significance only in contexts defined by other categories altogether. That he comes and goes, appears and then passes from the scene, in fact is not a single figure but two (or more) marks his systemic subordination, the Messiah-theme's categorical inadequacy.

That fact is born out by the first and most important element of theological thinking about the Messiah-theme: the multiplicity of Messiahs, even in the eschatological setting—the multiplicity and also the transience. Like Elijah, the Messiah is forerunner and precursor, but he is hardly an enduring player in the eschatological drama. Only God is. Time and again we shall see that the Messiah refers back to God for instructions on what he is to do. A mark of categorical subordination of the Messiah-theme is the diversity of Messiahs, each with his own story. One Messiah comes out of the line of Joseph, another out of the line of David. Both Messiahs (and others in that same classification, for example, the Messiah who is anointed to be high priest in charge of the army [Deut. 20:2–7, Mishnah Sotah Chapter Eight]), are mortal and subject to the human condition. One Messiah is murdered, replaced by another. The Messiah, moreover, is subject to the impulse to do evil, like any other man. The Messiah plays a transient role in the eschatological drama. People want the Messiah to come—that is the premise of the stories told in connection with repentance—but that is only because he will inaugurate the eschatological drama, not because, on his own, he will bring the drama to its conclusion. Only God will.

Most strikingly, the Messiah-theme plays itself out not only in the eschatological categories but in those that concern sin and the evil inclination. This presentation of the theme is accomplished through a complex composite at Bavli Sukkah 5:1D-5:4. The Mishnah-passage there invites from the framers of the Talmud's composite some comments on the "evil inclination," which in this context refers to libido in particular. Then we have a rather substantial discussion of sexuality. But a second look shows us that the composite concerns not sexual misbehavior or desire therefor, so much as the Messiah-theme. Here we find the allegation that the Messiah son of Joseph was killed because of the evil inclination; the Messiah son of David will be saved by God; the evil inclination then is made the counterweight to the Messiah and a threat to his survival. It is overcome, however, by study of the Torah. The composite is hardly coherent in detail, but its thematic program—Torah, Messiah, in the context of the Festival of Tabernacles—imposes upon the topic of the Mishnah-paragraph a quite different perspective from that set forth in the Mishnah itself.

The pertinent part of the composite, other parts of which we have already examined, is as follows (M. Suk. 5:1D-5:4 II.3ff./52a-b):

> 3.A. [With regard to "And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart" (Zech. 12:12),] What was the reason for the mourning [to which reference is made in Zechariah's statement]?
> B. R. Dosa and rabbis differed on this matter.
> C. One said, "It is on account of the Messiah, the son of Joseph, who was killed."
> D. And the other said, "It is on account of the evil inclination, which was killed."

The dispute balances the death of the Messiah against the death of the inclination to do evil, though these surely are opposites, and that leads to the inquiry, why should the land mourn at the death of the latter?

> E. Now in the view of him who said, "It is on account of the Messiah, the

son of Joseph, who was killed," we can make sense of the following verse of Scripture: "And they shall look on me because they have thrust him through, and they shall mourn for him as one mourns for his only son" (Zech. 12:10).

F. But in the view of him who has said, "It is on account of the evil inclination, which was killed," should this be an occasion for mourning? It should be an occasion for rejoicing. Why then should [the people] have wept?

The eschatological drama now comes into play: the disposition of the inclination to do evil at the end of days, which is to say, the key-action in the restoration of Eden, God's own intervention in securing for man the capacity to carry out God's will without obstacle:

G. [The answer] is in accord with the exposition of R. Judah: "In the time to come, the Holy One, blessed be he, will bring the evil inclination and slay it before the righteous and before the wicked.

L. "And so too the Holy One, blessed be he, will share their amazement, as it is said, "'Thus says the Lord of Hosts. If it be marvelous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in those days, it shall also be marvelous in my eyes' (Zech. 8:6)."

So much for the Messiah son of Joseph, now what of the Messiah son of David, and how does he relate to the events just now portrayed?

5.A. Our rabbis have taught on Tannaite authority:

B. To the Messiah, son of David, who is destined to be revealed—speedily, in our days!—the Holy One, blessed be he, will say, "Ask something from me, and I shall give it to you."

C. So it is said, "I will tell of the decree . . . this day have I begotten you, ask of me and I will give the nations for your inheritance" (Ps. 2:7–8).

D. When [the Messiah, son of David] sees the Messiah, son of Joseph, killed, he will say before [God], "Lord of the Age, I ask of you only life."

E. He will say to him, "Life? Before you spoke of it, David your father had already prophesied about you, as it is said, 'He asked life of you, you gave it to him, [even length of days forever and ever'] (Ps. 21:5)."

Here the Messiah-theme works itself out in the story of two Messiahs, one who was killed, the other not. This latter Messiah is the one who will participate in the process of the end of time, beginning with the resurrection—a matter more clearly expressed in sources we shall consider in a moment.

First, let us ask about the place, within the composite to which reference has just now been made, of the Messiah and the message that is conveyed by introducing that figure. A rapid recapitulation of the propositions in the large composite tells us what the Talmud has added to the Mishnah's topic, which is, the Festival of Tabernacles. None of them has any bearing at all on the topic at hand, but by introducing the set of propositions into the present context, the topic before us is recast:

1. God created the impulse to do evil but regrets it: there are four things that the Holy One, blessed be he, regrets he created, and these are they: Exile, the Chaldeans, the Ishmaelites, and the inclination to do evil.
2. The impulse to do evil is weak at the outset but powerful when it becomes habitual. The inclination to do evil to begin with is like a spider's thread and in the end like cart ropes. In the beginning one calls the evil inclination a passerby, then a guest, and finally, a man of the household. The impulse to do evil affects one's status in the world to come.

Now the integral character of the insertion about the Messiah becomes clear:

3. The Messiah was killed on account of the impulse to do evil. That is why the Messiah, son of David, asked God to spare his life and not allow him to be killed the way the Messiah son of Joseph was killed.
4. The impulse to do evil is stronger for sages than for others. But they possess the antidote in the Torah: "For it has done great things" (Joel 2:20): "And against disciples of sages more than against all the others." A man's inclination [to do evil] overcomes him every day. A man's inclination to do evil prevails over him every day and seeks to

kill him. If that vile one meets you, drag it to the house of study. If it is a stone, it will dissolve. If it is iron, it will be pulverized.

Here is where the self-evident connection proves revealing. If we did not know that the Festival of Tabernacles was associated with an autumnal celebration of the advent of rain and the fructifying of the fields, on the one side, and also identified as the occasion for the coming of the Messiah, on the other, then on the strength of this extrinsic composite, we should have formed the theory that those two protean conceptions governed.

So the self-evident connections reveal an entire cluster of connected categories and subsets. As is common in Rabbinic sources, we treat in one and the same setting private life and public affairs, this world and its concerns and the world to come as well. The private life—the role of the sexual impulse in one's persona affairs and fate—and the destiny of Israel in the world to come and the Messianic future correspond. God governs in both dimensions, the personal and the political. And sages then represent the realm of affairs: suffering more than others from the desires to sin, but better able than others to resist those desires. The upshot is, the Messiah-theme is subordinate to the purpose of the compiler of the composite, who wishes to underscore the link between overcoming the evil impulse and the advent of the world to come, beginning with the appearance of a (not the) Messiah.

Apart from the definitive composite just now examined, we find other statements on the subject that enjoy normative standing. A well-documented component of the Messiah-theme introduces the motif of tribulations to attend the coming of the Messiah. That may or may not involve the war of Gog and Magog prophesied by Ezekiel Chapters Thirty-Seven and Thirty-Eight. It also may or may not be intended to bring about repentance, to lead to the resurrection of the dead. Matters are somewhat confused. Sages do not much expand on the war of Gog and Magog, only insisting that God will be with Israel at that time. I have not identified systematic expositions of the details of that war, only allusions invited by the context of repentance at the last (Sifra CCLXIX:II.12):

C. "[Yet for all that, when they are in the land of their enemies,] I will not spurn them, neither will I abhor them so as to destroy them utterly":
D. But "I will not spurn them":—in the time of Vespasian.
E. ". . . neither will I abhor them":—in the time of Greece.
F. ". . . so as to destroy them utterly and break my covenant with them":—in the time of Haman.
G. ". . . for I am the Lord their God":—in the time of Gog.

Here is a statement that in the age of the coming of the Messiah, the war of Gog and Magog will be so terrifying as to make people forget prior troubles (T. Ber. 1:11):

J. Similarly, "Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old" (Is.. 43:18). Remember not the former things—these are [God's mighty acts in saving Israel] from the [various] kingdoms; nor consider things of old—these are [God's mighty acts in saving Israel] from Egypt.
K. "Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth" (Is. 43:19)—this refers to the war of Gog and Magog [at the end of time].
L. They drew a parable, to what may the matter be compared? To one who was walking in the way and a wolf attacked him, but he was saved from it. He would continually relate the incident of the wolf. Later a lion attacked him, but he was saved from it. He forgot the incident of the wolf and would relate the incident of the lion. Later still a serpent attacked him, but he was saved from it. He forgot the other two incidents and would continually relate the incident of the serpent.
M. So, too are Israel: the recent travails make them forget about the earlier ones.

The same point is made at greater length at the next statement (Pesiqta Rabbati XV:XV:1 = Pesiqta deRab Kahana V:X.13):

13.A. And rabbis say, "In the septennate in which the son of David comes, in the first of the seven year spell, 'I shall cause it to rain on one town and not on another' (Amos 4:7).

B. "In the second, the arrows of famine will be sent forth.
C. "In the third there will be a great famine, and men, women, and children will die in it, and the Torah will be forgotten in Israel.
D. "In the fourth, there will be a famine which is not really a famine, and plenty which is not plentiful.
E. "In the fifth year, there will be great plenty, and people will eat and drink and rejoice, and the Torah will again be renewed.
F. "In the sixth there will be great thunders.
G. "In the seventh there will be wars.
H. "And at the end of the seventh year of that septennate, the son of David will come."
I. Said R. Abbuha/Abbayye, "How many seven-year-cycles have there been like this one, and yet he has not come."

Another doctrine simply links the coming of the Messiah to trials in general, not connected with the great war of Gog and Magog:

J. But matters accord with what R. Yohanan said, "In the generation in which the son of David comes, disciples of sages will perish, and those that remain will have faint vision, with suffering and sighing, and terrible troubles will come on the people, and harsh decrees will be renewed. Before the first such decree is carried out, another will be brought along and joined to it."
K. Said R. Abun, "In the generation in which the son of David comes, the meeting place will be turned over to prostitution, the Galilee will be destroyed, Gablan will be desolate, and the Galileans will make the rounds from town to town and find no comfort.
L. "Truthful men will be gathered up, and the truth will be fenced in and go its way."
M. Where will it go?
N. A member of the household of R. Yannai said, "It will go and dwell in small flocks in the wilderness, in line with this verse of Scripture: Truth shall be among bands (Is. 59:15)."

But it is not only the dreadful war that will accompany the Messiah's advent. It also is the end of the social order altogether, the violation of all the rules of hierarchical classification that signify that order:

O. Said R. Nehorai, "In the generation in which the son of David comes, youths will humiliate old men, sages will rise before youths, a slave girl will abuse her mistress, a daughter-in-law her mother-in-law, a man's enemies will be his own householders, a son will not be ashamed for his father, the wisdom of scribes will turn rotten, the vine will give its fruit but wine will be expensive."
P. Said R. Abba bar Kahana, "The son of David will come only to a generation which is liable to be subject to total extermination."
Q. Said R. Yannai, "The son of David will come only to a generation the principal leaders of which are like dogs."
R. Said R. Levi, "If you see one generation after another blaspheming, look for the footsteps of the messiah-king.
S. "What verse of Scripture indicates it? 'Remember Lord the taunts hurled at your servant, how I have borne in my heart the calumnies of the nations; so have your enemies taunted us, O Lord, taunted the successors of your anointed king' (Ps. 89:51).
T. "What follows? 'Blessed is the Lord for ever, amen, amen '(Ps. 89:52)."

The tribulations of the end time thus may or may not involve the war of Gog and Magog, precipitated at the coming of the Messiah. A variety of troubles will mark that same event. I am inclined to think that motivating Israel to repent forms the logical connection between these troubles and his advent is to be drawn, but that is not consistently alleged in the main statements on the subject. The Messiah need not do more than signal a variety of events, political and social, that he neither brings about nor calls to a conclusion.

Whatever the other uses of the Messiah-theme, one fact is clear: the Messiah is linked to the resurrection of the dead, which inaugurates the period culminating in the world to come. But even here the Messiah—the one who descends from David—whose advent will mark the resurrection will not play an on-going, enduring role in the eschatological process; he is a subordinated figure. That fact underscores what we have noticed about the Messiah-theme's not forming a category unto itself but serving to fill out details in autonomous categories. For one thing, his role is limited, a determinate stage in the coming age. But how long will the Messiah's period last?

Within the doctrine that that period is finite and determinate, ending with the

resurrection of the dead or coincident with it, a number of positions, each within the logic of the exegesis of selected verses, are worked out. The first has three generations (Sifré to Deuteronomy CCCX:V.1):

A. ". . . consider the years of ages past":
B. This refers to the generation in which the messiah will be, which encompasses, in time, three generations, as it is said, "They shall fear you while the sun endures and so long as the moon, throughout all generations" (Ps. 72:5).

Another view maintains that the time of the Messiah is limited to forty years, or four hundred, or some determinate period. Then the dead will be raised (Pesiqta Rabbati I:VII.1):

A. How long are the days of the Messiah?
B. R. Aqiba says, "Forty years, in line with this verse: "And he afflicted you and allowed you to hunger (Deut. 8:3), and it is written, Make us glad according to the days in which you afflicted us" (Ps. 90:15). Just as the affliction lasted forty years in the wilderness, so the affliction here is forty years [with the result that the glad time is the same forty years]."
C. Said R. Abin, "What verse of Scripture further supports the position of R. Aqiba? 'As in the days of your coming forth from the land of Egypt I will show him marvelous things' (Mic. 7:15)."

Aqiba's brief period is now extended by Eliezer, then others expand it still further, all concurring that the Messiah's place in the resurrection of the dead is determinate, his role contingent on the unfolding of a process of which he forms only a chapter:

D. R. Eliezer says, "Four hundred years, as it is written, 'And they shall enslave them and torment them for four hundred years' (Gen. 15:13), and further it is written, 'Make us glad according to the days in which you afflicted us' (Ps. 90:15)."

Now we move from the record of history to the facts of nature, invoking a different analogy, with strikingly different consequences:

E. R. Berekhiah in the name of R. Dosa the Elder says, "Six hundred years, as it is written, 'As the days of a tree shall be the days of my people' (Is. 65:22).
F. "How long are the days of a tree? A sycamore lasts for six hundred years."

From the world of nature we progress to the world of time, a day and its length:

G. R. Eliezer b. R. Yosé the Galilean says, "A thousand years, as it is written, 'For a thousand years in your sight as are but as yesterday when it has passed' (Ps. 90:40), and it is written, 'The day of vengeance as in my heart but now my year of redemption is come' (Is. 63:4).
H. "The day of the Holy One, blessed be he, is the same as a thousand years for a mortal."

Once the metaphor of the day takes over, then meanings imputed to "day" are sorted out as well:

I. R. Joshua says, "Two thousand years, 'according to the days in which you afflicted us' (Ps. 90:15).
J. "For there are no fewer days [as in the cited verse] than two, and the day of the Holy One, blessed be he, is the same as a thousand years for a mortal."
K. R. Abbahu says, "Seven thousand years, as it is said, As a bride groom rejoices over his bride will your God rejoice over you (Is. 62:5), and how long does a groom rejoice over his bride? It is seven days,
L. "and the day of the Holy One, blessed be he, is the same as a thousand years for a mortal."

We move from "day" to "year," and the discussion trails off:

M. Rabbi says, "You cannot count it: 'For the day of vengeance that was in my heart and my year of redemption have come' (Is. 63:4)."
N. How long are the days of the Messiah? Three hundred and sixty-five thousand years will be the length of the days of the Messiah.

The details being left unclear, the main claim stands: the Messiah functions for a finite period. But what does he do in that time?

This is the point at which the Messiah-theme's subordination to other categories becomes clear. In the present context, the advent of the Messiah plays a role in the raising of the dead. Indeed, I have several times taken as fact the presence of the doctrine that, at the end of the Messiah's period, the dead are raised. This is now explicitly stated, the resurrection being joined to the

restoration of those who are raised from the grave to the Land of Israel. But at no point do I identify the claim that the Messiah is the one who raises the dead, the language that is used always simply saying, then—when he has come—the dead will rise or live; but God is the one who gives them breath:

2.A. Then the dead of the Land of Israel who are Israelites will live and derive benefit from them, and all the righteous who are overseas will come through tunnels.
B. And when they reach the land, the Holy One, blessed be he, will restore their breath, and they will rise and derive benefit from the days of the Messiah along with them [already in the land].
C. For it is said, "He who spread forth the earth and its offspring gives breath to the people on it" (Is. 42:5).

But does the Messiah bear responsibility for raising the dead? I do not identify that claim in so many words. And then, who bears responsibility for doing so? It is Israel, that point is made time and again when pertinent. Israel's own repentance will provide the occasion, and God will do the rest. It is when Israel has repented that the Messiah will come. It follows that the Messiah's advent and activity depend upon Israel, not on the Messiah's own autonomous decision, character, and behavior. Israel decides issues of its own attitude toward God and repents, God decides to respond to the change in will. But not a comparable, categorical imperative, the Messiah only responds to Israel's decision on when he should make his appearance to signal the change in the condition of mankind, and the Messiah responds to God's decision, taking a part within that sequence that comes to an end with Elijah.

That accounts for the heavy emphasis upon not the Messiah's intervention but Israel's own responsibility. We already have noted the tendency to assign the coming of the Messiah to times of suffering, which will have brought Israel to repent, and that is once more stated in the present context as well:

3.A. When will the royal Messiah come?
B. Said R. Eleazar, "Near to the Messiah's days, ten places will be swallowed up, ten places will be overturned, ten places will be wiped out."
C. And R. Hiyya bar Abba said, "The royal Messiah will come only to a generation the leaders of which are like dogs."
D. R. Eleazar says, "It will be in the time of a generation that is worthy of annihilation that the royal Messiah will come."
E. R. Levi said, "Near the time of the days of the Messiah a great event will take place in the world."

The time of the Messiah is compared to the period of redemption, and it is held to serve as a preparatory period, leading to the resurrection of the dead (systemic equivalent to the entry into the Land/Eden, which, by rights, ought to have marked the end of time). That inquiry into the correct analogy explains the definitions that are given, forty years, as with the generation of the wilderness, of four hundred years, as in the torment prior to redemption from Egypt, and so on down. The divisions of time do not come to an end with the end of history as written by the pagan kingdoms. From the time that their rule comes to an end, with the coming of the Messiah and the restoration of Israelite government, a sequence of further, differentiated periods commences; the time of the Messiah is only the first of these. Then comes the resurrection of the dead, along with the last judgment. Only at that point does the world to come get underway, and time will no longer be differentiated.

This conviction that the Messiah's period is determinate has, moreover, to be set into the context of the three periods of the history of creation: those marked by chaos, Torah, and Messiah. Specifically, the history of the world is divided into three units of two thousand years each, the age of chaos, Torah, and Messiah: with the Torah succeeding the age of chaos, and the Messiah, the age of the Torah (B. A.Z. 1:1 II.5/9a):

A. The Tannaite authority of the household of Elijah [stated], "The world will last for six thousand years: two thousand years of chaos, two thousand years of Torah, two thousand years of the time of the Messiah. But because of the

abundance of our sins, what has passed [of the foreordained time] has passed."

Israel now lives in the period of the Torah, which succeeds upon the chaos brought about by man and educates the heart of the people of the Torah:

B. As to the two thousand years of Torah, from what point do they commence? If one should say that it is from the actual giving of the Torah [at Mount Sinai], then up to this time there has not been so long a span of time. For if you look into the matter, you find that, from the creation to the giving of the Torah, the years comprise two thousand and part of the third thousand [specifically, 2,448; from Adam to Noah, 1,056; from Noah to Abraham, 891; from Abraham to the Exodus, 500, from the Creation to Exodus and the giving of the law at Sinai, 2,448 years]. Therefore the period is to be calculated from the time that Abraham and Sarah 'had gotten souls in Haran,' for we have learned by tradition that Abraham at that time was fifty-two years old. Now to what measure does the Tannaite calculation deduct? Since the Tannaite teaching is 448 years, you find that from the time that Abraham and Sarah 'had gotten souls in Haran,' to the giving of the Torah were 448 years."

The advent of the Messiah, then, marks a stage in the unfolding of periods (not "history") within the logic of creation: chaos, sin; Torah, repentance; Messiah, restoration—and then, as the other calculations have indicated, comes the world to come or eternal life, an age beyond time and change.

What about the gentiles in all this? Naturally, as soon as the category, Israel and the Torah, is invoked, its counterpart and opposite, the gentiles and idolatry, complements and balances the discussion. So too, when it comes to the Messiah, the gentiles are given a role. Specifically, the nations will bring gifts to the Messiah, and it will be a great honor to them that they are permitted to do so. But, like the judgment of the nations set forth—In the age to come the Holy One, blessed be He, will bring a scroll of the Torah and hold it in his bosom and say, 'Let him who has kept himself busy with it come and take his reward'"—leading to the exclusion of the gentiles from the world to come), their participation in the Messiah's activities only underscores Israel's centrality to the human drama (B. Pes. 10:7 II.22/118b):

A. Said R. Kahana, "When R. Ishmael b. R. Yosé fell ill, Rabbi sent word to him: 'Tell us two or three of the things that you said to us in the name of your father.'
B. "He sent word to him, 'This is what father said: "What is the meaning of the verse of Scripture, 'Praise the Lord all you nations' (Ps. 117:1)? What are the nations of the world doing in this setting? This is the sense of the statement, 'Praise the Lord all you nations' (Ps. 117:1) for the acts of might and wonder that he has done with them; all the more so us, since 'his mercy is great toward us.'"'

Now the nations take a more specific role in relationship to the Messiah, each claiming a relationship to the Messiah on account of its dealings with Israel:

C. "'And further: "Egypt is destined to bring a gift to the Messiah. He will think that he should not accept it from them. The Holy One, blessed be He, will say to the Messiah, 'Accept it from them, they provided shelter for my children in Egypt.' Forthwith: 'Nobles shall come out of Egypt, bringing gifts' (Ps. 68:32).
D. "The Ethiopians will propose an argument a fortiori concerning themselves, namely: 'If these, who subjugated them, do this, we, who never subjugated them, all the more so!' The Holy One, blessed be He, will say to the Messiah, 'Accept it from them.' Forthwith: 'Ethiopia shall hasten to stretch out her hands to God' (Ps. 68:32).

Rome always comes at the climax, and, in any sequence of the nations, will always mark the end of the discussion. Here Rome evokes its descent from Esau, a given for the Oral Torah, or from Edom, thus part of the extended family of Israel:

E. "Wicked Rome will then propose the same argument a fortiori in her own regard: 'If these, who are not their brethren, are such, then we, who are their brethren, all the more so!' The Holy One, blessed be He, will say to Gabriel, 'Rebuke the wild beast of the reeds, the multitude of the bulls' (Ps. 68:32)—'rebuke the wild beast and take possession of the congregation.'

F. "Another interpretation: 'Rebuke the wild beast of the reeds'—who dwells among the reeds, 'the boar out of the wood ravages it, that which moves in the field feeds on it' (Ps. 80:14)."'"

Here, the Messiah accords honor to the nations, except for Rome, the empire that will fall at the redemption of Israel now at hand. The governing concern, the nations relate to the Messiah only through Israel, registers. The Messiah then plays a part in the resurrection of the dead, on the one side, and the restoration of Israel, on the other. But the Messiah-doctrine clearly encompasses the view that the Messiah will not endure for the world to come but himself carries out the task assigned to him and then passes from the scene, a doctrine clearly indicated by the specification of the period of time assigned to the Messiah. How the Messiah figures in discussions of the age or world to come remains to be seen.

The Messiah and the World to Come

The world to come concludes the eschatological series that is comprised by sequenced paradigms that cover [1] past, [2] present, [3] Israel's collective repentance, [4] the age (days) of the Messiah, [5] days of the war of Gog and Magog, [6] the resurrection of the dead, [7] the judgment, and onward to the last things at [8] the world to come. If resurrection concerns the individual Israelite, with some further implications for the whole of Israel, the world to come that follows encompasses all Israel. The one embodies salvation for the private person, the other, redemption for the entire holy people, now at the end encompassing all of mankind within Israel. But what, exactly, when sages set forth their theological eschatology, do they mean by *'olam habba*, the world or the age that is coming? The world or the age to come (the Hebrew, *'olam*, may sustain either the locative, world, or the temporal-ordinal, age) completes, and necessarily forms the final chapter, of the theology of the Oral Torah. The age that is coming will find Adam's successor in Eden's replacement, that is, resurrected, judged and justified Israel—comprising nearly all Israelites who ever lived—now eternally rooted in the Land of Israel.

That the Messiah, whose advent marks the period before the resurrection of individuals, takes on a public task in the age to come. It is the reunion of Israel with the Land of Israel, such as brings about the resurrection of the dead, but now with attention to living Israel when the age to come dawns. For the task of the king-messiah is to gather the exiles and restore Israel to the Land of Israel. That is why the Messiah has an important task to perform not only in his own age, in raising the dead, but in the last age as well, though so far as I can discern, beyond that one action of restoring the exiles to the holy land, the Messiah plays no consequential part in the life of the age to come (Genesis Rabbah XCVIII:IX.2):

2.A. Said R. Hanin, "Israel does not require the learning of the king-messiah in the age to come, as it is said, 'Unto him shall the nations seek' (Is. 11:1)—but not Israel.

B. "If so, why will the king-messiah come? And what will he come to do? It is to gather together the exiles of Israel and to give them thirty religious duties: 'And I said to them, If you think good, give me my hire, and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my hire thirty-pieces of silver' (Zech. 11:12)."

The same point, that when the Messiah comes, he will gather the exiles back to the land, occurs at Song of Songs Rabbah LII:ii.1ff.: Said R. Hunia in the name of R. Justus, "When the exiles returning to Zion when the Messiah brings them back reach Taurus Munus, they are going to say a Song."

This brings us to the actualities of the world to come, what people are supposed to be doing then. What is going to happen in the age to come? Israel will eat and drink, sing and dance, and enjoy God, who will be lord of the dance. What about the restored Temple? The war of Gog and Magog having concluded, the dead having been returned to the Land and raised, the next stage

in the restoration of world order requires the reconstruction of the Temple, where, as we recall, God and man, Heaven and earth, meet (Genesis Rabbah XCVIII:II.7):

> A. "Then Jacob called his sons and said, 'Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you what shall befall you in days to come:"
> B. R. Simon said, "He showed them the fall of Gog, in line with this usage: 'It shall be in the end of days . . . when I shall be sanctified through you, O Gog' (Ez. 38:165). 'Behold, it shall come upon Edom' (Is. 34:5)."
> C. R. Judah said, "He showed them the building of the house of the sanctuary: 'And it shall come to pass in the end of days that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established' (Is. 2:2)."
> D. Rabbis say, "He came to reveal the time of the end to them, but it was hidden from him."

So in the now-familiar sequence of restoration, [1] final war, [2] advent of the Messiah and the resurrection and judgment, and [3] the age to come, next in sequence must be [4] the restoration of Israel to the Land, and [5] rebuilding the Temple, destroyed by reason of Israel's sin. It suffices at the end to note: in no way does the Messiah form a free-standing category-formation, autonomous of the established, eschatological ones concerning resurrection, on the one side, and the world to come, on the other. He forms a unit in the compositions that comprise the doctrine of repentance, the resurrection of the dead, and the world to come; but on his own accomplishes no purpose unique to himself. In that sense, Rabbinic Judaism cannot be deemed a Messianic religion.

Jacob Neusner

Midrash and the Oral Torah: What Did the Rabbinic Sages Mean by "the Oral Torah"?

Rabbinic Judaism classifies its canonical writings as parts of "the Oral Torah" revealed by God to Moses at Sinai and transmitted from then to late antiquity in a process of tradition from master to disciple. Part of that process of tradition is held to involve a work of exegesis of Scripture in light of oral tradition. A precise understanding of Midrash in the context of formative Judaism therefore requires attention to the relationship of the Torah-myth involving the dual Torah, written and oral, to the processes of exegesis. First, it is necessary to specify the components of the myth and the meanings assigned to them, start to finish. Five categories pertain, and are to be differentiated, as indicated: [1] the component involving the name of Moses, the category, "Torah," and the conception of tradition; [2] the definition of "the Oral Torah" as a repository of laws set forth by God to Moses at Sinai; [3] the specification of particular laws assigned origin with Moses at Sinai, not written in the Torah or derived from the Torah; [4] the matter of the status of such laws as are revealed by God to Moses at Sinai; [5] the explicit myth of the dual Torah, written and oral. These categories in general run parallel, but they rarely overlap; passages that pertain to "a law revealed by God to Moses at Sinai" rarely speak of "oral Torah," and those that speak of "the Oral Torah" rarely specify the Halakhic contents. Not only so, but we quickly realize that a variety of issues defines what is at stake in the introduction of the Oral Torah. We follow how these several categories of data unfold, in documentary sequence, from the Mishnah through the Bavli.

The Initial Stage: The Mishnah, The Tosefta. The Midrash-Compilations Attributed to Tannaite Authorities: Sifra, Sifré to Numbers, Sifré to Deuteronomy, and Mekhilta Attributed to R. Ishmael Tractate Abot

1. Moses, Torah, Tradition: There is one important statement that places Moses squarely into the process of oral formulation and oral transmission of "Torah,"

thus: oral Torah in a chain of tradition from Sinai: Moses received Torah from Sinai and handed it on to Joshua, Joshua to elders, and elders to prophets. And prophets handed it on to the men of the great assembly. They said three things, "Be prudent in judgment. Raise up many disciples. Make a fence for the Torah" (M. Abot 1:1A). That formulation of matters stands all by itself.

2. The Dual Torah refers to a corpus of rules, orally formulated and orally handed on, *ipsissima verba* of God to Moses at Sinai: Two modes of transmitting traditions provide access to the Torah of Sinai, a chain of tradition, imparted through oral repetition and memorization, without the help of notes of any kind, from Moses to current sages. What is transmitted is the exact words of a legal teaching, not just the gist of the ruling. These rules, specifically, are located at M. Peah 2:5–6, the exact wording of the Mishnah-rule being represented as oral tradition, who sows his field with two types of wheat: If he harvests [the wheat] in one lot, he designates one [portion of produce as] peah. If he harvests [the wheat] in two lots, he designates two [portions of produce as] peah; M. Eduyyot 8:7, Elijah is not going to come to declare unclean or to declare clean, to put out or to draw near, but only to put out those who have been brought near by force, and to draw near those who have been put out by force; M. Yadayim 4:3, Ammon and Moab give the poor man's tithe in the Sabbatical year.
3. Laws Revealed by God to Moses at Sinai: a distinct category of statements encompasses lists of topics covered by laws revealed by God to Moses at Sinai, laws that have been handed on in tradition; but these are not stated in the exact wording of the tradition, confirming the wording of the Mishnah. Rather we are given the gist of the rule, which often concerns its status, e.g., a given rite is not merely a custom but a matter of Torah-law. The laws revealed by God to Moses at Sinai and contained in lists of such laws are these: the law of the willow-branch is a law revealed to Moses at Sinai but not referred to in written Scripture];
4. The Status of Laws Revealed by God to Moses at Sinai; the Status of Laws contained by the Oral Torah: The consequence of alleging that a given rule derives from Oral Tradition or that a law, in exact wording or only the gist, is one of the laws revealed to Moses at Sinai, is to validate that rule in the context of a dispute on the definition of the law. These verbal formulations are not widely known, which is why a dispute can overspread an issue supposedly settled by traditional law. But the oral tradition is preserved, whether by the chain of tradition (Yohanan ben Zakkai) or by the common practice of the people.
5. Dual Torah: When people speak of "two Torahs," that reference does not necessarily trigger "one in writing, the other oral," but rather, "two *or more* Torahs"—representing dissension and schism. So too, "my Torahs," means that "to him were revealed the mysteries of the Torah in all their details." When the king writes "two Torahs," the meaning is, one to carry along on trips, the other to leave home. In a Tannaite Midrash-compilation we find an explicit reference to "traditions in memory," but the contrast is drawn between "repeating-traditions-in-memory" and actually carrying them out. At stake is not two Torahs, one in writing, one in memory, but the difference between (merely) learning traditions (by the way, by memory) and (actually) doing them. When, in the same setting, we find a claim that there are (only) two Torahs, one in writing, one in memory, that is immediately rejected in favor of the view that Israel possesses many Torahs. I find only one explicit allusion to the dual Torah in the formulation that would become conventional: ". . . and your Torahs to Israel:—This teaches that two Torahs were given to Israel, one memorized, the other in writing.

The Intermediate Stage: The Yerushalmi Halakhah, The Yerushalmi Aggadah, The Midrash-Compilations of the Yerushalmi-Period: Genesis Rabbah, Leviticus Rabbah, and Pesiqta deRab Kahana

The Halakhic Corpus

1. Moses, Torah, Tradition: The Torah given at Sinai included more than just the words written upon the tablets, but also Scripture, the Mishnah, the Talmud, and Aggadah—and even what the experienced students in the future are going to conclude. If a court does its work properly, the court can by its own efforts regain access to the Oral Torah's contents. More cherished are those matters that rest upon the written Torah and those that rest upon the oral Torah—or vice versa. Opinion is divided on that question. That hierarchization of traditions is involved is implicit: if you have kept what is preserved orally and also kept what is in writing, I shall make a covenant with you, and if not, I shall not make a covenant with you vs. if you have kept what is preserved orally and you have kept what is preserved in writing, you shall receive a reward, and if not, you shall not receive a reward.
2. The Dual Torah refers to not only a corpus of rules, orally formulated and orally handed on, but principles that are logical and hence accessible to the logic of the sages themselves: This is explicit in what has just now been cited: what experienced students will conclude is encompassed within the revelation of Sinai. But if a law can be deduced from Scripture through exegesis or logical reasoning, then it does not fall into the classification of oral Torah. At issue is whether a law derived from analogical reasoning—what is like follows the rule governing that to which it is comparable—a conclusion was reached only on the basis of reasoning, not on the basis of laws revealed to Moses at Sinai vs. the view that that was precisely how they had received the law, but they had forgotten it.
3. Laws Revealed by God to Moses at Sinai: This may pertain to the entire Mishnah. The Mishnah in particular is the repository of laws revealed by God to Moses at Sinai and passed on in oral tradition, and what is not explicit is implicit in the logic and reasoning of the Mishnah laws: If a ruling on a matter of law is transmitted to you and you do not know its rationale, do not reject it in favor of another ruling with a lucid explanation. For many matters of law were stated transmitted to Moses on Sinai, and despite the fact that their rationale is unclear, all of them are embedded in the Mishnah!

Those laws expounded on the explicit authority of] written verses, i.e., those with proof-texts, are more numerous and so more unfamiliar and alien than those expounded on [the mere authority of] oral tradition and without proof-texts.

The explicit formulation of the particular laws is a separate matter. What is included in these laws are the following rules, given as the gist, not oral formulation of *ipsissima verba*: The minimum number of eleven days which by law one must reckon between one menstrual period and another; all fixed measurements [enjoy the status of] a law [revealed] to Moses at Sinai; the procession with the willow branch [M. Suk. 4:5], the water libation [M. Suk. 4:9), and the law concerning the ten saplings [M. Sheb. 1:6]; the manner of sewing the columns [of the scroll of the Torah] together is a law revealed to Moses at Sinai; it is a law revealed to Moses at Sinai that they should write [scrolls] on hides, write them with ink, trace lines on hides with a reed, bind with hair, repair them with a cloth [should there be a hole] which then is glued in, and sew them with sinews; those letters—M, N, S, P, K [that appear in two forms]—were revealed as a law to Moses at Sinai; that tefillin should be square and black is a law revealed to Moses at Sinai; the specification of a *maah* of silver or two pieces of silver derives from the laws of the Torah.

There are verbal signals of exact formulation of the wording, not the gist, e.g., In any case in which we have learned, 'nonetheless,' we deal with a law revealed to Moses at Sinai.

4. The Status of Laws Revealed by God to Moses at Sinai; the Status of Laws contained by the Oral Torah: Decisions by a court and the practice of the people may represent, or enjoy the status of, a law revealed by God to Moses at Sinai, thus: in the case of any matter to which a court turns its attention, that matter will endure as a law given to Moses on Sinai; so too Hillel's advice on affirming popular practice as evidence of prophetic tradition. Some matters of law were transmitted orally, and some matters of law were transmitted in writing, and those [commandments] transmitted orally are more weighty. The two types of laws are of equal weight. Or the laws transmitted orally are more weighty, because their observance leads to the establishment of God's covenant.
5. Dual Torah: The possession of a Torah that is memorized in addition to one in writing is what distinguishes Israel from the gentiles.

The Aggadic Corpus

1. Moses, Torah, Tradition: The Torah encompasses Scripture, Mishnah, Talmud, and lore—and even what an experienced disciple is destined to teach in the future before his master already has been stated to Moses at Sinai. The way in which oral traditions are formulated and transmitted adheres to the pattern initiated by God: he would frame a rule and repeat it twice to Moses, who would memorize it. In the Bavli, as we shall see, this allegation is expanded and filled out.
2. The Dual Torah refers to not only a corpus of rules, orally formulated and orally handed on, but principles that are logical and hence accessible to the logic of the sages themselves: I discern nothing relevant.
3. Laws Revealed by God to Moses at Sinai: This question is not raised in Aggadic materials.
4. The Status of Laws Revealed by God to Moses at Sinai; the Status of Laws contained by the Oral Torah: The teachings handed on orally are more precious than those preserved in writing (or the opposite). But keeping the laws preserved in both media alone produces a reward. What is debated in the Halakhic corpus is settled here, in the preference assigned to oral tradition.
5. Dual Torah: What is transmitted orally must be learned by memory, not in writing, and what is transmitted in writing must not be preserved by memory.

The Final Statement: The Bavli Halakhah. The Bavli Aggadah. The Rabbah Midrash-Compilations: Ruth, Esther, Lamentations, and Song of Songs Rabbah. Abot deRabbi Nathan

The Halakhic Corpus

1. Moses, Torah, Tradition: The whole Torah represents law handed down to Moses from Sinai. But this opinion yields no practical consequences and settles no questions.
2. The Dual Torah refers to not only a corpus of rules, orally formulated and orally handed on, but principles that are logical and hence accessible to the logic of the sages themselves: I see in the Halakhic corpus no allegation pertinent to this component of the myth.
3. Laws Revealed by God to Moses at Sinai: Specific laws revealed by God to Moses at Sinai are as follows: the law governing the hide of the phylacteries; the boxes containing the prayer parchments have to be square; they must be tied with their hair and sewn with their tendons [that is, those of the same type of animal that proves the parchment and the leather, a clean animal]; the shin of the phylacteries, the dalet of the phylacteries, the yod of the phylacteries; Scriptural portions in the prayerbox [*tefillin*] must

be written on parchment of high quality, those for the doorpost markers may be written on parchment of lower quality; the former is the side of the hide next to the meat of the animal, the latter, the side of the hide next to the hair; phylacteries may be tied around with their hair and sewn with their tendons; the [laws covering] measurements [of minimal quantities], of interpositions and partitions constitute law revealed to Moses at Sinai; the prohibition of "pairs," as an unlikely number; the rule governing the ten plants [that constitute a tree planted field, which one may plough right down to the New Year of the Sabbatical Year, rather than ceasing cultivation well in advance of the Sabbatical Year, as one must do in ordinary fields not planted in trees], the rule about the willow, and the rule about the water-offering; the [unstitched border] remaining of the sewing of a parchment scroll of the Torah; scribal rules, for example, the correct text of Scripture deriving from the scribes, the embellishments of the letters deriving from the scribes, the words that are read in the text not as they are spelled out, the words that are spelled out but not read; the prohibition of orlah produce abroad; the rules governing the prayer-boxes containing passages of Scripture represent a law revealed to Moses from Sinai that gut-string is to be used for sewing them, and by analogy, the requirement extends to the material used for joining parchment skins for the Torah; the prohibition against Israelites' having sexual relations with gentile women in general, not just those of the seven nations; there is an underside of the prayer-parchment; the way in which the knot of the straps of the boxes containing prayer parchments is tied; the required volume of half a log of oil for a thanksgiving offering, a quarter of a log of wine for a Nazirite's offering, and the eleven days that intervene between one menstrual period and the next.

4. The Status of Laws Revealed by God to Moses at Sinai; the Status of Laws contained by the Oral Torah: What one authority sees as a law practiced in the province [as matter of local custom] is viewed by another as a law given to Moses at Sinai.
5. Dual Torah: The Torah is in two parts, written and oral. The former is comprised by the five Books of Moses, the latter by the six divisions of the Mishnah. The former is formulated and transmitted in writing, the latter, solely by memorization.

The Aggadic Corpus

1. Moses, Torah, Tradition: There are two Torahs, one in writing, one in memory. One cannot accept the written Torah without accepting also the oral one. The larger part is in writing, the smaller part in memory, or vice versa. Matters that are to be memorized you have not got the right to state in writing, and those that are to be in writing you have not got the right to state from memory. The covenant was made for the sake of the oral Torah: God made a covenant with Israel only on account of words that are memorized.
2. The Dual Torah refers to a corpus of rules, orally formulated and orally handed on, ipsissima verba of God to Moses at Sinai: The Mishnah derives from a process of oral formulation and oral transmission at Sinai, and the exact wording and language of the Mishnah, the whole Mishnah, chapter by chapter, not just the gist of the laws or the contents of a few stray rules, are orally formulated and orally transmitted.
3. Laws Revealed by God to Moses at Sinai: Moses learned sentences of the Mishnah ("what is the order of Mishnah-instruction") verbatim from God, repeated them until he knew them by heart, then taught them to Aaron, who likewise went through the same process of memorization. The only way to study the Torah is through mnemonics. So we deal not only with a particular document, the Mishnah, but with an entire corpus of rules subject to a single definitive process.
4. The Status of Laws Revealed by God

to Moses at Sinai; the Status of Laws contained by the Oral Torah: The sages' traditions recapitulate those of the written Torah but do not simply repeat them verbatim or rest on exegesis of verses of Scripture. An eminent authority may say something, and then the same thing may be reported as a law revealed by God to Moses at Mount Sinai. So the oral part of the Torah may is accessible also through sound reasoning. What sages teach concerning the Halakhah derives from the revelation of Moses, even though for his part Moses does not recognize, or even understand, what they are saying. That is because the basic rules are his, their extension and elaboration thus originating with him, even though the work of amplification is in the hands of sages.

5. Dual Torah: As above: there are two Torahs, one oral, one in writing. The one is the Pentateuch, the other, the Mishnah. Logic can produce the contents of the oral Torah.

When the Sages Referred to "the Oral Torah," to What Did They Make Reference? The Documentary History of a Symbol and a Myth

We commence with a claim of tradition, passed on through a chain of masters and disciples, and we end with a specific embodiment of that tradition in particular documents. That is the story before us. We now briefly survey the results, thus following the sequence of periods in the history of the myth of revelation of the Torah in the dual media of writing and memory and the consequent symbol of the Oral Torah as indicated by the sequence of documents, laid out in assumed order of closure, that is, the documentary history of the Oral Torah.

The Initial Stage

The components of the myth of the Oral Torah are these:

1. there was a memorized tradition handed on from Sinai through a chain of tradition, encompassing the masters and disciples of the Mishnah itself;
2. transmitted in oral tradition are the exact wording of some rules that surface in the Mishnah, three in all, concerning the law of peah, the task of Elijah, and the classification of the crops grown in Ammon and Moab in the Sabbatical Year;
3. transmitted in oral tradition, also, is the gist of laws concerning certain rites, specifically, the law of the willow branch in the rite of Tabernacles;
4. a law that derives from oral tradition may not be widely known, and sages through processes of reasoning may reach the decision on the same matter that is confirmed, also, by oral tradition; [5] no reference to more than a single Torah yields "two Torahs, one in writing, the other in memory."

So by "Oral Torah" in the Mishnah, Tosefta, and Tannaite compilations, people ordinarily meant, "oral tradition," and the specific contents of that oral tradition encompassed a few rules, not widely circulated. An allusion to "Oral Torah" did not signify the status of specific documents, nor did it encompass a vast corpus of laws, nor did it raise the issue of the taxonomy of traditions as to their derivation, nor did the plural of Torah routinely yield the dual Torah. At issue in the initial stage is the status of a few specific rulings and, of far greater urgency, the standing of the sages in a chain of tradition to Sinai. The dual Torah, the Oral Torah—these do not surface. It is entirely feasible to speak of oral tradition without introducing the category of the Oral Torah, whether the symbol or the myth.

The Intermediate Stage

Sages' traditions derive from Sinai; it is possible to set forth that claim without speaking of dual, or the Oral, Torah. Indeed, the Torah revealed at Sinai encompasses a vast corpus of tradition, including the Mishnah, Talmud, and Aggadah (whatever these words signified), and, more important, whatever conclusions a qualified disciple will ever

reach are inferences derived by right reasoning from the revelation of Sinai itself. The value of laws deriving from written as against oral formulation and transmission is subject to debate. But if a law can be shown by exegesis to derive from Scripture, then it is classified as written Torah. The Mishnah certainly is classified as a critical component of the Oral Torah. In a distinct framing of matters, a corpus of specific facts, stated not in ipsissima verba but as the gist of matters, explicitly derives from oral formulation and oral transmission, and that is a separate allegation from the one that places the entire Mishnah into the center of the Oral Torah. The facts that come down as "law revealed to Moses at Sinai" seem random, not centered on a given area of law, though they tend to group themselves around a few large topics, e.g., Tabernacles, tefillin, scribal rules. (No one seems to have held "words of scribes" equivalent to "laws revealed to Moses at Sinai," and I am inclined to think sages never deemed the two categories of Halakhah to constitute a single corpus.) Not only so, but popular practice gives evidence of prophetic tradition. The Torah comprises two components, written and memorized, and what belongs in the one category is not to be confused with what belongs in the other.

I see here all of the components of the myth of the dual Torah. But side by side are the distinct theories, a chain of oral tradition carried on by sages, a specific corpus, a document or set of documents, that constitutes that specific part of the Torah, the Oral part, deriving from Sinai. As to the explicit framing of the doctrine of the Oral Torah, specifically mediated by sages, on whom everyone else depends, in its fullness, that would await the final statement of the matter, in the story of Hillel and the convert. So too, the doctrine that through their acute powers of analysis and reasoning sages gain access to the Torah received by Moses at Sinai would reach its complete statement only in the final stage, And what is interesting, as these two components of the symbol and myth of the Oral Torah do not intersect in the prior and intermediate stages, so they do not intersect at the end.

The Final Statement

A number of specific rules are handed on in oral tradition, the list expanding to encompass a variety of topics not treated in counterpart materials of the intermediate stage, e.g., a whole set of rulings on tefillin and other scribal matters, issues of uncleanness, and the like. But disputes on what, in fact, belongs to the Oral Torah also surface, with cases in which what one party assigns to local custom is treated by another as part of the oral Torah of Sinai. Now we have an explicit statement that the Oral Torah is the Mishnah, the Written Torah, the Pentateuch. The Aggadic corpus adds the view that one cannot accept the written Torah without accepting the oral Torah. The Mishnah in particular derives from a process of oral formulation and oral transmission, chapter by chapter, and the Oral Torah involves not just the gist of some stray rules but the entire document. Moses learned sentences of the oral Torah, the Mishnah, verbatim from God, and so on down. The oral part of the Torah also may be accessible through sound reasoning. The three definitive statements that pertain to the Oral Torah in particular, the Mishnah as the Oral Torah, and the revelation beyond the limits of Scripture in general—Hillel and the convert, God teaching Mishnah-teachings to Moses, thence Aaron and onward, and Moses and Aqiba, respectively—all find their place in large and beautifully articulated compositions of the Bavli—there alone!

Result

The important shift apparently takes place between the first and the intermediate stages, between ca. 200 and ca. 400, the former represented by the Mishnah, the latter by the Yerushalmi. Then a rather general theory of the transmission of the Torah through a chain of tradition comprised by sages becomes particular and is focused upon a particular document and its contents. But a second shift, toward a coherent and explicit framing of matters, is marked by the vast improvement in the matter set forth in the

Bavli and related documents. The Yerushalmi states matters in a fresh and original manner, the Bavli then imposed a definitive structure and left no gaps. But, interestingly, several distinct components of the myth and symbol remained discrete, even at the end. At the initial stage the contents of the tradition encompass a few topics, in their explicit wording. "Torahs" invoked dissension and heresy, not the dual Torah. But one important starting point for the unfolding of the myth does establish its presence: the interplay of reason and tradition, the former able to attain the result of the latter. Sages' vote then coincides with the explicit language of the oral tradition. But in the documents treated here, it is highly unusual to find the next step: the identification of sages' rulings, fully spelled out in *ipsissima verba*, with the oral Torah. That is the step that is taken in the intermediate stage. Then the generalized myth of an oral tradition is particularized in two ways, first, into the Mishnah, but, second, into a set of specific topics, the ruling of which is presupposed but the wording of the ruling of which is not spelled out, let alone cited in, or from, a particular document, e.g., the Mishnah. The myth of the dual Torah reaches its full and mature statement only in the final stage, when the Talmud of Babylonia sets forth the doctrine as it would circulate through time: the Torah is in two parts, written and oral, and acceptance of the latter is necessary along with affirmation of the former; and all access to the whole Torah then depends on the sages who alone master both. So the intermediate stage, the documents of the fourth and early fifth centuries of the Land of Israel, marks the transformation of tradition into Torah, of sages' traditions in general into particular compilations, and the final stage, the documents of the fifth through the seventh centuries, then forms the setting for the recapitulation of that transformation and its authoritative claim.

These simple results recapitulate in particular terms, for the case before us, the conclusions I reached concerning the fourth century writings (in the Land of Israel) as the initial statement of Rabbinic Judaism in its encounter with triumphant Christianity and the sixth century ones (in Babylonia) as the final and definitive statement of that same Judaism. The doctrine of the dual Torah with focus on the Mishnah as the result oral tradition forms a principal statement intersecting with the Christian invention of the Bible. The shifts from one set of documents to another mark reshaping of myths and symbols that continue start to finish. It is appropriate that the most far-reaching and profound statement is the Bavli's story of Hillel and the convert, assigning to the beginning what is realized only at the end.

Context: Analysis

The two native categories of the Rabbinic tradition, Halakhah and Aggadah, show in the particulars before us the general traits that respectively characterize those distinct modes of thought and expression.

The Halakhah

In the Halakhah we find oral tradition without the myth of the dual Torah, the contents of a chain of tradition that transmits the gist of rules, or the exact wording of rules, from Sinai, but no medium for that tradition that is given documentary form, e.g., the Mishnah. Two motifs predominate: [1] the chain of tradition, and [2] the correspondence of the results of logic and analysis with those of oral tradition. The Halakhic portrayal of the Oral Torah lays its stress upon two matters, the contents of the dual Torah and the relationship of the law deriving from oral tradition to that attained through logical inquiry. The Halakhic statement in the Mishnah with tractate Abot as its apologetics lays its stress on the chain of tradition that provides sages with access to the revelation at Sinai. To that chain of tradition and its contents the specific documentary locus of a given law is irrelevant; the substance of the law, essential. The chain of tradition transmits the gist of rules but also, in specified cases, ipsissima verba, the exact wording of (some) laws revealed at Sinai. The Halakhah initially does not require the symbol of duality or the myth

of an oral revelation culminating in the Mishnah in particular. At the earliest stage the Mishnah is not given a privileged position, oral tradition is. The sayings of the earliest phase are perfectly contented to attribute to oral tradition a vast corpus of materials—Mishnah Talmud, Aggadah; the whole forms the foundation of the covenant. What is vital to the Halakhah, stressed early and late, is the congruity of the outcome of sages' logic in decisions and the result of oral tradition in those same decisions. Then what the Rabbinic sages meant by "Oral Torah" in the Halakhic framework is, the substance of the Halakhah, however now incorporated in particular compilations, but always in all the Halakhic particulars. So by "Oral Torah" the Halakhic discourse means, "sages' rulings." Oral tradition affirms sages' status and establishes the hierarchical priority of their teachings.

The Aggadah

The Aggadah cannot speak of "oral laws" without invoking the symbol of the dual Torah and the myth of oral formulation and oral transmission of the other half of the whole Torah of Sinai. So the Aggadic focus identifies as critical the restatement of the matter of oral tradition in the symbol of the Torah in two media and the accompanying myth of the revelation of the Torah, through a chain of sages, in an Oral Torah ultimately embodied in the Mishnah. Here is where we find the stress on the particular document that embodies the Oral Torah, namely, the Mishnah, and the insistence on accepting both parts of the Torah, the Pentateuch and the Mishnah. The Aggadah frames its claim in a variety of ways, but three take priority: [1] embodying the claim that what sages now teach is implicit in Moses's revelation and intuited through logic by sages; [2] telling in narrative form the story of how the Mishnah, in particular, is memorized, chapter by chapter, through God's instruction to Moses, Moses to Aaron, and so on down; [3] the explicit statement of Hillel that there are two Torahs, and that people depend upon sages for access to the second of the two.

Matrix: Interpretation. The Confluence of Halakhah and Aggadah

Clearly, the Aggadah explains and accounts for the Halakhic enterprise, and, in the simplest terms, the two bodies of writing concur, the Halakhic taking priority and defining the task of the Aggadic. That result presents no surprise. But it depends upon taking for granted the coherence of all of the data, reading the Halakhic facts in the setting of the Aggadic assertions about those facts. Now, what if we possessed the one without the other—should we comprehend each in its own terms? The answer is, each makes a statement autonomous of that of the other. And the components of the composition of the one do not recapitulate those of the formation of the other. By "the Oral Torah" the Halakhah means, the substance of the law deriving from tradition accessible by reasoning about Pentateuchal law and the principles thereof. The Halakhah speaks of the specificities of the law ("a law revealed to Moses at Sinai") and the interiorities of the intellectual process. To that program of analytical thought the framing of matters in terms of particular compilations of traditions, the Mishnah above all, makes little contribution and proves marginal. For its part, by "the Oral Torah" the Aggadah means, the specific form, the Mishnah. That is then made to represent the entire corpus of sages' teachings, all deriving in their exact wording from Sinai and God's revelation to Moses at Sinai. The Aggadah faces outward, speaking of the generalities of authority and hierarchy and insisting upon the priority of the sage in the entire process of revealing the Torah.

On the one side, one may argue, the Aggadah complements and completes the Halakhah by providing a narrative context for the plain facts of normative rules, a rationale for the structure as a whole. On the other side, one must also concede, the Aggadah may stand on its own, addressing issues of authority and hierarchy without attention to the specificities of the law. And so too for the Halakhah: the Halakhah may make its statement in its own terms, within the simple but naked claim that reason and revelation intersect and coincide. In that

case, the Halakhic corpus has no need for an elaborate myth of origins or theory of hierarchical status. Then—viewed each in its own setting as an autonomous set of coherent statements—the Aggadah has identified as its issue the politics of the covenant, and the Halakhah, its logic. The exteriority of the one embodies one set of issues, the interiority of the other, a different set of issues altogether. The Halakhah maintains its own orbit, guided by its own critical mass and gravity, the Aggadah is drawn and propelled by forces beyond itself. The one is like the earth or the planets, in their orbits around the sun. The other is like the sherds and remnants of matter that traverse the solar system from distant space. But the two intersect, the Halakhah in its stable orbit, the Aggadah in its progression from world to world, and sometimes (to end the metaphor), a piece of rock from outer space hits a planet. Then, in the energy of their collision the two structures become a single system. Or so it would seem for the Aggadah and the Halakhah of the Oral Torah. Only together does the Torah establish its presence, or, in secular terms, does Judaism make its statement.

JACOB NEUSNER

Miracles in Judaism, the Classical Statement

EXTRAORDINARY events that have no possible human or natural cause are recognized in the Hebrew Bible and in later forms of Judaism as deriving from the direct intervention of God in the human sphere. In the Rabbinic literature, such occurrences are referred to simply by the term *nes*, signifying a "wondrous event" and roughly comparable to the English term "miracle."[1] In the Hebrew Bible, by contrast, events that violate the natural order much more commonly are designated as "signs" (*otot, mofetim*),[2] a term that points to the distinctive role miracles play in ancient Israelite theology. This is because, in the Hebrew Bible, God performs miracles—breaks directly into the physical world—for the explicit purpose of demonstrating his power and informing people of his specific desires and particular plans. In light of this purpose, events such as the ten plagues that God brought against the Egyptians are not adequately described through the simple concept of "miracle," that is, as extraordinary occurrences with no natural explanation. Rather, within the Hebrew Bible, these remarkable happenings have a specific theological function: they are signs of the absolute power of the Israelite deity and proof that Moses indeed speaks for that deity when he states what is expected of the Egyptians.

The characteristic function of miracles in the Hebrew Bible is clear from Scripture's recognition of a difference between a miracle and a mere magic trick. The Bible understands that magic can successfully be performed by magicians of all peoples (Exod. 7:22) and is not a source of knowledge about God or God's will.[3] Scripture sees miracles, by contrast, as unparalleled manifestations of God's will that function as saving acts on behalf of God's people. Miracles are at once signs of what God desires and proof of God's ability to accomplish his will.

The important point is that, in the biblical view, people come to know God, God's qualities, and God's demands on Israel and the world only insofar as God personally and directly takes the initiative to reveal these things. In the Hebrew Bible, knowledge of God and of what God desires of humankind does not result from theological or philosophical speculation. It is known, rather, from the wondrous deeds through which God reveals himself in the world. As in the case of the Exodus from Egypt, such signs occur in particular in the context of God's saving acts, *niflaot*, through which the deity expresses his sovereignty and brings salvation to his people. But such miracles pertain as well to individuals, as in the marvelous works of God described in the Psalms (see, e.g., Ps. 9:1–2). In all, miracles constitute the foundation for the Israelites' acceptance of God's sovereignty, as Is. 25:1–2 makes explicit:

> O Lord, thou art my God; I will exalt thee, I will praise thy name; for thou hast done wonderful things,[4] plans formed of old, faithful and sure. For thou hast made the city a heap, the fortified city a ruin; the palace of aliens is a city no more, it will never be rebuilt.

From the destruction of a fortified city to the placement of a rainbow in the heaven (Gen. 9:13), God's extraordinary acts instruct people of God's will and assure them of God's continued saving powers.

The Historical Context for Changing Perspectives on Miracles

Before we examine the Rabbinic development of the biblical conception of miracles, let us reflect upon the biblical view's power in the periods of the Jewish commonwealths, in which it was shaped. While the First Temple stood, the people of Israel rightly perceived themselves as the great and mighty nation they understood God to have intended them to be. They recognized at the foundation of their success the power of a God who fought their battles and assured their victories. Even the decline of Israelite power in the sixth and fifth centuries B.C.E., represented in the destruction of the first Temple and the Babylonian exile, did little to supplant this view. The people understood that they were exiled because of their sins. The same God who wrought miracles on behalf of a faithful nation logically would break into history to bring punishment upon a sinful one. The almost immediate rebuilding of the Temple, the emergence of the Second Commonwealth, and the fact that for hundreds of years Jewish life went on largely as it always had meant that throughout biblical times the image of a God who exercised power directly in the human sphere was not significantly challenged.

Such a challenge, as we shall now see, occurred in the first centuries C.E., in the period that gave rise to Rabbinic Judaism. For this Judaism developed in a period of devastating events of history that forced Jews carefully to evaluate who they were, what they believed, and how they would face an increasingly inhospitable world. Conceived in the period following the war with Rome that, in the first century, led to the destruction of the second Jerusalem Temple, the Rabbinic program for Judaism was shaped in the immediate aftermath of the devastating Bar Kokhba Revolt of the second century, which left as many as half a million Jews dead and which resulted in Jerusalem's being turned into a Roman colony, with a temple of Jupiter Capitolinus erected on the Temple Mount. The Rabbinic program then achieved its classical formulation and gained control over the Jewish nation as a whole in the fourth-sixth centuries, the period of the firm establishment of Christianity as the official religion of the Roman world.

As a result of these historical events, both the political and theological contexts in which Jews previously had interpreted the events of history—viewing them as the result of the miraculous intervention of God into the human sphere—had been dramatically altered. If God could work miracles, why did he now not miraculously return the nation to its former glory? Rather than denying the power of God, on the one hand, or promising that miracles should be again expected, on the other, the sages who shaped Rabbinic Judaism addressed this question by entirely rethinking the inherited biblical perspective on what can and should be expected of God. The destruction of the Temple and the failed revolt under Bar Kokhba had made clear to these rabbis that the Jewish people were not well served by ambitious political leaders who insisted that God would immediately and miraculously fulfill the biblical promise of Jewish sovereignty over the holy land. In the Rabbinic view, rather, Jews were better off forgetting the notion of God's wondrous actions in history, accepting, instead, Roman political domination. Under this domination, rather than depending upon miracles, they would develop modes of piety independent of priestly and nationalistic aspirations, unconcerned with what was happening on the stage of history.

The result of this thinking was that, under Rabbinic leadership, Jews would continue to pray for the rebuilding of the Temple, the re-establishment of animal sacrifice, and renewed Israelite sovereignty, to be achieved, to be sure, through God's personal and

miraculous intervention in history. But these things now were seen not as matters for this day but as signifiers of the advent of the messianic age. They would be events of the end of time, not aspects of this world, expected to come about today or tomorrow. The Rabbinic ideology thus refocused the people's concerns from the events of political history, which are, after all, far beyond the control of the individual, to events within the life and control of each person and family. What came to matter were the everyday details of life, the recurring actions that, day-in and day-out, define who we are and that demarcate what is truly important to us. How do we relate to family and community? By what ethic do we carry out our business dealings? How do we acknowledge our debt to God not for the events of history but for everyday things, for the food we eat and for the wonders of the universe evidenced in the daily rising and setting of the sun?

Certainly the rabbis understand the observance of a detailed system of ritual and communal law as directly affecting God, as leading God to act on the people's behalf. But, through the Rabbinic system, Israelites were made to recognize that they should expect no quick, spectacular response as had occurred, for instance, in the period of the Exodus from Egypt or, more recently, in the return, after one generation, from the Babylonian exile. A messiah would come, but only in some distant future. And, in light of the battles and bloodshed that were understood to come along with the messianic event, people should not even be too desirous of living in that coming time.

In this way, those who created Rabbinic Judaism responded to the critical theological problem of their day. God's presence and love of the people had always been represented in his mighty deeds on behalf of the people. Insofar as such deeds no longer could be expected, let alone depended upon, Rabbinic religion located a new proof for the existence of God and a new explanation for how the people could be assured of God's continued care and providential concern. The people, the rabbis said, must find God in their everyday lives rather than expect God to appear to them in miraculous acts of intervention into human history.

Miracles in Rabbinic Judaism

In line with their new thinking, even as the Talmudic rabbis acknowledged that miracles occur and are evidence of God's action in the world, they proposed that such miracles are neither an appropriate foundation for faith nor the expected method through which God should in their own day protect individuals or the Israelite people as a whole. One explanation for the cessation of divine miracles was that contemporary generations were not as pious and worthy of miraculous intervention as earlier ones had been (B. Ber. 4a):

> A. "Till your people pass over, O Lord, till your people pass over, that you have acquired" [Exod. 15:16].
> B. "Till your people pass over" refers to the [Israelites'] first entry into the Land [in Joshua's time].
> C. "Till your people pass over, that you have acquired" refers to the second entry into the Land [in the time of Ezra and Nehemiah. The point is that a miracle was promised not only for the first entry but also for the second. Why did no miracle occur the second time around?]
> D. On the basis of this statement, sages have said, "The Israelites were worthy of having a miracle performed for them in the time of Ezra also, just as it had been performed for them in the time of Joshua b. Nun, but sin caused [the miracle to be withheld]."

The rabbis understood later generations to have been more sinful than former ones, and this brought an end to miracles. To the extent that they understood miracles to have continued to occur past the biblical age at all (and even up to their own day), the later rabbis saw even this possibility as having diminished over the period of a few generation (B. Ber. 20a):

> A. Said R. Papa to Abayye, "What makes the difference that the former authorities had miracles done for them, while miracles are not done for us?
> B. "If it is because of the issue of learning Tannaite traditions. In the time of R. Judah, all they learned to repeat was

the matter of Damages, while, for our part, we repeat all six divisions [of the Mishnah and their associated Tannaite traditions].
C. "And when R. Judah would come to the passage in tractate Uqsin [that begins], 'A woman who presses vegetables in a pot . . .' (M. Uqs. 2:1), or, some say, 'Olives pressed with their leaves are clean' (M. Uqs. 2:1), he would say [nothing more than], 'Here I see the issues raised by Rab and Samuel for reflection.' But when we repeat tractate Uqsin, we have thirteen sessions [to devote to the matter].
D. "Yet when R. Judah would take off one sandal [in preparation for a fast for rain], it would rain right away, while we torture ourselves and cry out, and no one [in heaven] pays attention to us."
E. [Abayye] said to [Papa], "The former authorities would give their lives for the sanctification of the Divine Name, while we do not give our lives for the sanctification of the Divine Name."

Torah study was widely regarded as the foundation of piety and a source of access to God's power. But rabbis of the Talmudic period saw even this power has having been closed off to themselves, the result of their lessened overall righteousness. The later generations, as a result, were no longer worthy of miracles (B. San. 94b):

A. What is the meaning of this verse: "When aforetime the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali lightened its burden, but in later times it was made heavy by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilee of the nations" (Is. 8:23)?
B. It was not like the early generations, who made the yoke of the Torah light for themselves, but the later generations, who made the yoke of the Torah heavy for themselves.
C. And these [early generations] were worthy that a miracle should be done for them, just as was done for those who passed through the sea and trampled over the Jordan.

Overall these passages argue that miracles are done only for particularly deserving people. Later generations have failed to live up to God's expectations and therefore are unworthy of miracles. While in the context of the first centuries, this approach served well to explain the circumstance of the Israelite nation (as the liturgy puts it, "Because of our sins we have been exiled from our land. . . ."), it is actually quite different from the approach to miracles expressed, as we have seen, in the Hebrew Scriptures. For in the Bible, miracles are not simply or even primarily a reward for piety. As in the case of the Exodus from Egypt, referred to in this passage at C, miracles are, rather, a method by which God initially expresses his divine will, providing the Israelite nation with the evidence they need to accept his lordship, and leading them to accept the covenant and abide by its law.[5]

We thus see the extent to which the apparent cessation of miracles in the period of the rabbis has led them entirely to rethink the biblical attitude, which held it reasonable for a person to pray for or depend upon God's miraculous intervention. The rabbis, by contrast, insist that one should not endanger him or herself in anticipation of a saving miracle (B. Ta. 20b, B. Ket. 61b). Rather, they went so far as to consider the human expectation of or demand for the miraculous to be folly, even when that expectation pertained not to a personal desire but to the fulfillment of a goal clearly shared by God (M. A.Z. 4:7):

A. They asked sages in Rome, "If [God] is not in favor of idolatry, why does he not wipe it away?"
B. They said to them, "If people worshipped something of which the world had no need, he certainly would wipe it away.
C. "But, lo, people worship the sun, moon, stars, and planets.
D. "Now do you think he is going to wipe out his world because of idiots?"
E. They said to them, "If so, let him destroy something [associated with idolatry] of which the world has no need, and leave something that the world needs!"
F. They said to them, "Then we should strengthen the hands of those who worship things [which would not be destroyed], for then they would say, 'Now you know full well that they are gods, for, lo, they were not wiped out!'"

God, in this passage's view, cannot be expected to perform miracles even in order to accomplish a purpose in keeping with God's own plan and desires. In a point that

is echoed throughout the Rabbinic discussion of miracles, the text argues that this is the case not because God does not desire to perform such miracles but because they would not work. God, in the example given here, does not wipe out idolatry since, in the nature of things, doing so would also destroy needed aspects of the world or, at least, would wind up strengthening the very beliefs God wishes in the first place to eradicate. The rabbis thus imagine God's power to be restricted by the logic that confines human reasoning and action. Miracles, even if they were still to occur, would have to conform to the logic and order of the world as humans perceive it. How different this is from the miraculous events of the Exodus, in which, for instance, God placed all of Egypt in darkness while the Israelites had light (Exod. 10:22–23). While crediting God with tremendous power, the rabbis, by contrast, do not conceive God to have the ability to violate the basic principles by which events normally unfold.

In line with this sense of the limitations faced even by God in working miracles, the rabbis understood the miracles described in the Bible to have been preordained, arranged by God at the time of creation, when, for instance, the manna consumed by the Israelites after the Exodus from Egypt and the mouth of Balaam's talking ass were created (M. Ab. 5:6; see Exod. Rab. 21:6). They even understood God to have been able to split the sea at the time of the Exodus only because, when he created the world, God had stipulated with the sea that, on this specific occasion, it would disrupt its normal flow (Exod. Rab. 21:6). Had it not been for this prior agreement, the rabbis argue, God could not have split the sea at all. Miracles thus were not seen as actually interrupting the natural order; they were rather a part of that order, only appearing to people as extraordinary.

Even while continuing in the Bible's comprehension that God reveals his will through miracles, the rabbis reject the notion that, in their own day, such a course of action on God's part is either appropriate or acceptable. The rabbis see in God's miraculous deeds, rather, an attempt inappropriately to coerce the people to accept God's rule. And, in apparent contrast to Scripture, they are adamant that such a coerced "faith" is not a legitimate faith at all. Thus the rabbis go so far as to reject God's redeeming of the people from Egypt as an appropriate foundation for the Israelites' accepting of the covenant (B. Shab. 88a):

> A. "And they [that is, the people of Israel, after the Exodus, camped at Sinai] stood below the mount" (Exod. 19:17):
> B. Actually underneath the mountain.
> C. Said R. Abdimi bar Hama bar Hasa, "This teaches that the Holy One, blessed be he, held the mountain over Israel like a cask and said to them, 'If you accept the Torah, well and good, and if not, then there is where your grave will be.'"
> D. Said R. Aha bar Jacob, "On this basis there is ground for a powerful protest against the Torah [since it was imposed by force]."
> E. Said Raba, "Nonetheless, the generation of the time of Ahasuerus accepted it, as it is written, 'The Jews ordained and took it upon themselves'[6] (Est. 9:27)—they confirmed what the others [at the time of Sinai] had already accepted."

The passage argues that God's actions against the Egyptians did more than to help the Israelites to recognize God's power and sovereignty. Rather, God's miracles created a circumstance of compulsion, in which the people of Israel had no choice but to accept the Torah. The nation had just witnessed God's overwhelming power, including the deity's willingness to drown an entire army. The people now stood in the wilderness with no where to go, no means of defending themselves, and insufficient provisions. The rabbis imagine this circumstance as being comparable to standing "beneath" Sinai, for the people's refusal to accept God's covenant would certainly have meant their being left to die in the wilderness. Rejection of the covenant would lead to death as surely as if the mountain literally were dropped on them.

In the rabbis' reading, then, the miracle of the Exodus and the wondrous events at Sinai were too coercive properly to form the foundation of a meaningful faith.[7] God's actions bordered on the inappropriate. People cannot legitimately be compelled to accept the obligations of faith (or of any

other contract), and therefore the Israelites had grounds for a protest against the Torah, acceptance of which appears to have been coerced.

Alongside this reading of the events of Sinai, the rabbis propose that Scripture contains a different, appropriate model of faith. This is exemplified by what happened in the period of Esther and Mordechai, described in the above passage at E. In the story of the book of Esther, as in the account of the Exodus, the Jews faced a very real enemy. But in the story of Esther, they appear, at least on the surface, to fight this enemy through their own strength and determination. God is never mentioned in the book of Esther, and the Jews' victory, while depicted as miraculous, involves no violation of the natural order, no wondrous deeds attributed directly to the God of Israel. The rabbis recognize that, in this setting, it was up to the people themselves to discern in their own human victory evidence of God's presence. In light of their personal, theological interpretation of what had happened, the people of the time of Esther chose on their own volition to confirm the covenant. In this the rabbis find the appropriate foundation for the people of Israel's continuing commitment to the covenant.

In all, the rabbis reject miracles as an appropriate means through which God may assure the people's acceptance of the covenant and promote adherence to the divine will. Rather, in the Rabbinic view, the people of Israel must themselves be the primary actors in the emergence of their own national history and in the development of their faith. Within such thinking, God's wondrous actions in the human sphere are things of the past not only because God has ceased to perform such deeds or because the people no longer are worthy of them. To an equal extent, wonders no longer occur because they are too coercive to be useful in the evolution of the people's faith and in the expansion of the nation's relationship with God.

This view of the impact of God's wondrous deeds does not mean that the rabbis held miracles entirely to have ceased. Rather, the sages rethought the nature and purpose of God's saving acts. As in the Rabbinic reading of the story of Esther, they increasingly viewed as miraculous the results of human endeavor. Additionally, they focused upon the day-to-day wonders of the world around them, seeing miracles in even the smallest aspects of everyday life. Such things as a person's recovery from an illness now proved God's continued presence and never ending concern for the people of Israel (B. Ned. 41a):

> A. R. Alexandri also said in the name of R. Hiyya bar Abba, "Greater is the miracle that is done for a sick person than the miracle that was done for Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah [Dan. 3]. That of Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah was fire made by man, which anybody can put out, but that of a sick person is fire made by Heaven, and who can put that out?"

Similarly, the earth's provision to people of sufficient food could be viewed as a miracle greater than the final redemption of the entire people (B. Pes. 118a):

> A. Said R. Yohanan, "Providing food for a person is more difficult than redemption, for with respect to redemption, it is written, 'The angel who has redeemed me from all evil' (Gen. 48:16), suggesting that an everyday angel was enough [to provide redemption]; [but] with respect to food [it says]: 'the God who has fed me' [Gen. 48:15, suggesting that God himself must do this]."

In this approach to interpreting events in the world around them, people are led not to expect a miraculous redemption or any kind of divine interventions into the cosmic order. Such things, in the Rabbinic view, are unnecessary as proof of the existence of God or of God's concern for the people of Israel. Rather, just as the people are to serve God through observance of the covenant and through righteousness in everyday activities, so the everyday events of nature prove God's continuing providential concern. The flow of day and night, the rhythm of the seasons, the earth's providing of food were now to be recognized as greater miracles than those reported in Scripture, in which God's intervention in the physical world gave birth to extraordinary events that changed history. In the Rabbinic reading, miracles were no longer to be

viewed primarily as events in which God loudly proclaimed his presence and will. Miracles, rather, occurred quietly, every day, and it was the responsibility of the people to identify them and to learn from them.

In a period in which God no longer seemed to act in history to save the people, the rabbis thus recognized a new imperative. In the first centuries, the people were in a new position *vis-à-vis* God. Now they needed themselves to buttress their faith by identifying God's presence and power in the operation of the natural order and by locating a divine element within their own conduct and in the exercise of their own strength. The Hebrew Bible had taken it as axiomatic that God's qualities and demands on Israel would be known through God's miraculous revelation, exactly as had occurred in the theophany on Sinai. Now the people themselves would be responsible for finding and interpreting God's will, without the help of God's direct intervention into the human sphere.

This point is particularly clear in the rabbis' complete rejection of the notion that, in their day, as at Sinai, God had the right to make his will known to people by miraculously breaking into the human order so as to inform them of the content of covenantal law. In the Rabbinic, unlike the biblical, perspective, such knowledge of the divine is left up to people alone to discover. This they do through their active intellectual engagement with the already revealed law. The possibility of God's miraculous intervention into the legal debates through which the rabbis discern the law was contemplated. But this interference was neither welcome nor effective,[8] as the often cited story of the Oven of Akhnai makes clear (B. B.M. 59b):

A. On that day, R. Eliezer brought forward all of the arguments in the world, but they [that is, the other rabbis] did not accept them from him.
B. Said he to them, "If the law agrees with me, let this carob-tree prove it!" The carob-tree was torn a hundred cubits out of its place.
C. They said to him, "No proof can be brought from a carob-tree."
D. He said to them, "If the law agrees with me, let the stream of water prove it!" The stream of water flowed backward.
E. Again they said to him, "No proof can be brought from a stream of water."
F. Again he said to them, "If the law agrees with me, let the walls of this house of study prove it!" The walls tilted, about to fall.
G. R. Joshua rebuked the walls, saying, "When disciples of sages are engaged in a legal dispute, what role do you walls play?"
H. Hence, they did not fall, in honor of R. Joshua; but nor did they resume the upright, in honor of R. Eliezer.
I. Again [Eliezer] said to them, "If the law agrees with me let it be proved from heaven!" An echo came forth [from heaven] and said, "Why do you dispute with R. Eliezer? For in all matters, the law agrees with him!"
J. But R. Joshua arose and exclaimed [citing Deut. 30:12], "It [the law] is not in heaven!"
K. [Later] R. Nathan met Elijah [the prophet] and asked him, "What did the holy one, blessed be he, do at that time?"
L. [Elijah] replied, "He laughed, saying, 'My sons have defeated me! My sons have defeated me!"

The passage strikingly rejects the idea that God's miraculous intervention into the human sphere, in this case, into the activities of the study house, is acceptable. The story asserts rather that the law is defined by a vote of the majority of sages, who determine proper conduct based upon their wisdom and knowledge, and who give no heed to supernatural interference. What is the nature of the "defeat," about which God laughs? God chuckles over the unexpected result of his own success as a parent. God has created and nurtured children, imbued them with such a sense of responsibility and intellectual cunning that they insist on living in a world of their own making. They no longer desire or will accept God's interference—even God's miraculous intervention—into what they see as their affairs.

In their original setting in the book of Deuteronomy, God's words, "*It is not in heaven*," mean only that people cannot deny that they know the law and are able to follow it. Now these words come back to haunt God. If the Torah is on earth and not in heaven, if it is in the people's mouth and heart, then God may no longer interfere in its interpretation. The law is among the sages. They are empowered to engage in

reasoned debate and then to vote. They thereby take over the role of God in revealing Torah.

But there is an even more significant way in which God's children have defeated him. This is in the fact that God, as much as the people, is bound by the rules of Torah. God, just like the people, must accept and follow the logically decided view of the sages on earth. That which they deem holy and right becomes, in a cosmic sense, even in God's mind, holy and right. The human mind and intellect come to determine the content of God's mind and intellect. They—and not miraculous deeds of God—define the ultimate reality in the world.

The Rabbinic passages we have reviewed suggest the extent to which the Rabbinic conception of miracles reflects a significant shift from the biblical to the Rabbinic understanding of God. The biblical system had cherished God's brilliant acts in history, the signs and miracles that showed the people God's power and that comforted them, even when they were punished, by assuring them of the absolute logic and justice in the world. But living in a period in which such logic was elusive and in which the punishments received by the Jewish people fit no known crime, the rabbis rejected the old approach. The problem was not simply that the biblical conception was flawed and did not reflect the reality that the rabbis knew. Rather, they saw the biblical dependence upon miracles as an inappropriate path to piety. For the rabbis as for the Bible's authorship, God was present, to be worshipped and trusted to fulfill the terms of the covenant made at Sinai. But for the rabbis unlike the Bible's authors, the source and foundation of the people's faith, their desire to worship God, and their acceptance of the terms of the covenant needed to derive from their own independent recognition of the truth of God's presence and power. The determination of the people to love and worship God needed to be independent of any expectation of God's present-day miraculous intervention into human history.

The rabbis thus rejected the notion that it is appropriate for God to control people or force them into obedience through voices from heaven, miracles, divine messengers, or even by descending to earth personally to fight their battles. Instead, in the Rabbinic view, it is up to individual Jews to find the otherwise hidden God. This they are to do by acting responsibly in pursuing justice, promoting what is good, observing the law and even, when times demand it, by fighting their own battles to save themselves, as happened in the time of Esther and Mordechai. In everyday acts of goodness and self-protection—whether they seem to change the world or not—the people are to appreciate the presence of God and to find strength in the knowledge that they are following God's path.

The rabbis in this way reject the coercion implicit in a system in which God forces belief and conformity to his will through displays of power. Central to Rabbinic faith, instead, is the individual's coming to find God through contact with the compelling divine word—that is, Torah. In this system, the individual is brought into the world of faith and worship by his or her own initiative. This is not in response to God's spectacular miracles but as an aspect of a spiritual and national awakening in which the people come to recognize the presence of God in their own human abilities and intellect.

In an odd way, exactly by placing the power to define Torah in human hands, the rabbis make the powerful point that, despite the way the events of history made things seem, God still exists, still rules over the people and land of Israel, and still can be depended upon to bring redemption. It is only for these reasons that Torah still matters at all, still must be explicated, still must be followed. But, in the Rabbinic system, the God who had been understood to make and destroy nations, to show his will through splendid and miraculous deeds, is pictured as moving rather in response to the intentions and perceptions of everyday Jews who engage in the study of, and therefore the creation of, revelation; who lead their daily lives in accordance with divine precepts; who eat their food as though their home-tables are the Temple altar; and who live their lives as though they are a kingdom of priests.

At the heart of this Rabbinic approach

is the notion that knowledge of God results not primarily from God's self-revelation in history. It depends rather upon humanity's proper grasp of the Torah, requiring the Jews' active engagement with the details of revelation, through sagacity, erudition, and human intelligence. According to Rabbinic Judaism, it is through thinking about Torah, not by witnessing and interpreting divine miracles, that the Jew asks the deeper question of what can be known about God. Thinking about Torah, the rabbis hold, reveals God's thought in God's own words.[9] Through this human participation in revelation comes the possibility of returning the world to the way God meant it to be when, on the seventh day of creation, God saw that what he had created was good.

The rabbis responded to the devastating events of their day by rejecting the simplistic biblical view that all history attests to God's will. But they did not therefore withdraw from that history into a world of ritual or cultic action. Rather, Jews came increasingly to insist that the individual has the power and the obligation to use his or her intellect to define and then to work to create a new and better world, a world of holiness and sanctification, a world as we know it should be, wish it to be, and, if we only imagine intently enough and work hard enough, will assure that it someday will be. In confrontation with the real world in which people lived, the biblical image of God's power to act through miracles yielded the belief that *people themselves have and must use their power to transform the world*. It is here, rather than in God's intervention in the human realm, that the rabbis saw the real miracle of God's power.[10]

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NOTES

[1] Thus M. Ab. 5:4 states, "Ten wonders were done for our fathers in Egypt, and ten at the Sea." The point is that the process through which the Israelites were redeemed from Egyptian bondage was miraculous. But this statement in itself makes no particular theological point.

[2] In Scripture, the term *nes* occurs in the sense of miracle only once, Num. 26:10. Otherwise, it refers to a long pole on which an object or banner can be placed for display (Num. 21:8–9, Is. 30:17 and 33:23). On the general conception of miracles in biblical and later Rabbinic thinking, see Jacob Licht, "Miracle," *EJ*, vol. 12, col. 73, and Yair Zakovitch, "Miracle (OT), *ABD*, vol. 4, pp. 845–846.

[3] On this point, see MAGIC.

[4] *Fele*, from the same root as the term *niflaot*.

[5] This is exactly what occurs at 1 Kings 18:21–39. At Elijah's behest, God miraculously sends a fire from heaven to ignite offerings laid out for him. This leads the people, who had been tending towards the worship of Baal, to declare, "The Lord, he is God." As in Egypt, the miracle thus precedes the people's affirmation of Yahweh as their God.

[6] The verse continues: "and their descendants and all who joined them, that without fail they would keep these two days according to what was written and at the time appointed every year."

[7] On this reading of the passage, see Irving Greenberg, *The Jewish Way. Living the Holidays* (New York, 1993), pp. 249–252.

[8] Note by contrast Exod. 18:14–26's story about Moses's establishing a system of judges. While these judges were to help settle disputes among the people, their commission did not in any way impinge upon God's absolute authority. Thus they were to handle only the clear-cut matters, in which the law already was known. But any hard case, in which there was a question of law, was to be brought to Moses, who would continue as before to "represent the people before God and bring their cases to God" (Exod. 18:19).

[9] I paraphrase Jacob Neusner, "God: How, in Judaism, Do We Know God," in Jacob Neusner, ed., *Formative Judaism* (Seventh Series, Atlanta, 1993), p. 209.

[10] On medieval Jewish philosophers' understanding of miracles, see JUDAISM, PHILOSOPHY AND THEOLOGY OF, MEDIEVAL.

Mishnah, Analogical-Contrastive Reasoning in

THE paramount mode of reasoning in the halakhic process, represented by the Mishnah, can be referred to as "analogical-contrastive." The logic may be expressed very simply. All persons, things, or actions that fall within a single species of a given genus in a uniform system of classification follow a single rule. All persons, things, or actions that fall within a different species of that same given genus in a uniform system of classification follow precisely the opposite rule. Stated in gross terms, some-

thing is either like or unlike something else within a single genus that validates comparison and contrast. If it is like that other thing, it follows its rule. If it is not like that other thing, it follows the opposite of its rule. That reasoning by analogy and contrast dominates in the formation of the Mishnah's rules, and it is, therefore, its generative mode of thought. We can, accordingly, work our way back from conclusions that the Mishnah's authorship presents through the stages of reasoning that have led to reaching those conclusions.

To explain how this logic works, we first present the principal mode of discourse of the Mishnah, which is to set forth rules by means of lists of like or unlike persons, actions, or things. A common rule applies to the like, and the opposite rule to the unlike. On the surface, the Mishnah's philosophy is an exercise in *Listenwissenschaft*, and, beneath the surface, the Mishnah's philosophy carries forward the logic of comparison and contrast, expressed through the results conveyed by lists and the rules governing their items. This analogical-contrastive logic then validates the making of lists. So let us turn to the Mishnah's *Listenwissenschaft* as the first in the two stages of the exposition of the philosophical modes of thought of the document.

The Mishnah's logic of cogent discourse establishes propositions that rest upon philosophical bases, e.g., through the proposal of a thesis and the composition of a list of facts that (e.g., through shared traits of a taxonomic order) prove the thesis. The Mishnah presents rules and treats stories (inclusive of history) as incidental and of merely taxonomic interest. Its logic is propositional, and its intellect does its work through a vast labor of classification, comparison and contrast generating governing rules and generalizations. A simple contrasting case shows us that the stakes are very high. For that purpose, let us turn to a document our authorship knew well, namely, the written Torah.

The Pentateuch appeals to a different logic of cogent discourse from the Mishnah's. It is the cogency imparted by teleology, that is, a logic that provides an account of how things were in order to explain how things are and set forth how they should be, with the tabernacle in the wilderness the model for (and modeled after) the Temple in the Jerusalem abuilding. The Mishnah speaks in a continuing present tense, saying only how things are, indifferent to the were and the will-be. The Pentateuch focuses upon self-conscious "Israel," saying who they were and what they must become to overcome how they now are. The Mishnah understands by "Israel" as much the individual as the nation and identifies as its principal actors, the heroes of its narrative, not the family become a nation, but the priest and the householder, the woman and the slave, the adult and the child, and other castes and categories of person within an inward-looking, established, fully landed community. Given the Mishnah's authorship's interest in classifications and categories, therefore in systematic hierarchization of an orderly world, one can hardly find odd that (re)definition of the subject-matter and problematic of the systemic social entity.

We may briefly dwell on this matter of difference in the prevailing logic, because the contrast allows us to see how one document will appeal to one logic, another to a different logic. While the Pentateuch appeals to the logic of teleology to draw together and make sense of facts, so making connections by appeal to the end and drawing conclusions concerning the purpose of things, the Mishnah's authorship knows only the philosophical logic of syllogism, the rule-making logic of lists. The Pentateuchal logic reached concrete expression in narrative, which served to point to the direction and goal of matters, hence, in the nature of things, of history. Accordingly, those authors, when putting together diverse materials, so shaped everything as to form of it all as continuous a narrative as they could construct, and through that "history" that they made up, they delivered their message and also portrayed that message as cogent and compelling. If the Pentateuchal writers were theologians of history, the Mishnah's aimed at composing a natural philosophy for supernatural, holy Israel. Like good Aristotelians, they would uncover the components of the rules by comparison and contrast, showing the rule for one thing by

finding out how it compared with like things and contrasted with the unlike. Then, in their view, the unknown would become known, conforming to the rule of the like thing, also to the opposite of the rule governing the unlike thing.

That purpose is accomplished, in particular, though list-making, which places on display the data of the like and the unlike and implicitly (ordinarily, not explicitly) then conveys the rule. It is this resort to list-making that accounts for the rhetorical stress on groups of examples of a common principle, three or five for instance. Once a series is established, the authorship assumes, the governing rule will be perceived. That explains why, in exposing the interior logic of its authorship's intellect, the Mishnah had to be a book of lists, with the implicit order, the nomothetic traits of a monothetic order, dictating the ordinarily unstated general and encompassing rule.

And all this why? It is in order to make a single statement, endless times over, and to repeat in a mass of tangled detail precisely the same fundamental judgment. The Mishnah in its way is as blatantly repetitious in its fundamental statement as is the Pentateuch. But the power of the Pentateuchal authorship, denied to that of the Mishnah, lies in its capacity always to be heard, to create sound by resonance of the surfaces of things. The Pentateuch is a fundamentally popular and accessible piece of writing. By contrast, the Mishnah's writers spoke into the depths, anticipating a more acute hearing than they ever would receive. So the repetitions of Scripture reinforce the message, while the endlessly repeated paradigm of the Mishnah sits too deep in the structure of the system to gain hearing from the ear that lacks acuity or to attain visibility to the untutored eye. So much for the logic. What of the systemic message? Given the subtlety of intellect of the Mishnah's authorship, we cannot find surprising that the message speaks not only in what is said, but in what is omitted.

The framers of the Mishnah appeal solely to the traits of things. The logical basis of coherent speech and discourse in the Mishnah then derives from Listenwissenschaft. That mode of thought defines way of proving propositions through classification, so establishing a set of shared traits that form a rule which compels us to reach a given conclusion. Probative facts derive from the classification of data, all of which point in one direction and not in another. A catalogue of facts, for example, may be so composed that, through the regularities and indicative traits of the entries, the catalogue yields a proposition. A list of parallel items all together point to a simple conclusion; the conclusion may or may not be given at the end of the catalogue, but the catalogue—by definition—is pointed. All of the catalogued facts are taken to bear self-evident connections to one another, established by those pertinent shared traits implicit in the composition of the list, therefore also bearing meaning and pointing through the weight of evidence to an inescapable conclusion. The discrete facts then join together because of some trait common to them all. This is a mode of classification of facts to lead to an identification of what the facts have in common and—it goes without saying, an explanation of their meaning.

The diverse topical program of the Mishnah, time and again making the same points on the centrality of order, works itself out in a single logic of cogent discourse, one that seeks the rule that governs diverse cases. And that logic states within its interior structure the fundamental point of the document as a whole. The correspondence of logic to system here, as in the Pentateuch viewed overall, hardly presents surprises. Seeing how the logic does its work within the document therefore need not detain us for very long. Two pericopes of the Mishnah show us the logic that joins fact to fact, sentence to sentence, in a cogent proposition, that is, in our terms, a paragraph that makes a statement. To see how this intellect does its work we return to familiar materials, those in which we have already discerned formalization of speech. We come first to Mishnah Berakhot Chapter Eight, to see list-making in its simplest form, and then to Mishnah Sanhedrin Chapter Two, to see the more subtle way in which list-making yields a powerfully-argued philosophical theorem. In the first of our two abstracts we have a list, carefully formulated,

in which the announcement at the outset tells us what is catalogued, and in which careful mnemonic devices so arrange matters that we may readily remember the conflicting opinions. So in formal terms, we have a list that means to facilitate memorization. But in substantive terms, the purpose of the list and its message(s) are not set forth, and only ample exegesis will succeed in spelling out what is at stake. Here is an instance of a Mishnah-passage which demands an exegesis not supplied by the Mishnah's authorship.

MISHNAH BERAKHOT CHAPTER EIGHT

8:1.A. These are the things which are between the House of Shammai and the House of Hillel in [regard to] the meal:

[1] B. The House of Shammai say, "One blesses over the day, and afterward one blesses over the wine." And the House of Hillel say, "One blesses over the wine, and afterward one blesses over the day."

[2] 8:2.A. The House of Shammai say, "They wash the hands and afterward mix the cup." And the House of Hillel say, "They mix the cup and afterward wash the hands."

[3] 8:3.A. The House of Shammai say, "He dries his hands on the cloth and lays it on the table." And the House of Hillel say, "On the pillow."

[4] 8:4.A. The House of Shammai say, "They clean the house, and afterward they wash the hands." And the House of Hillel say, "They wash the hands, and afterward they clean the house."

[5] 8:5.A. The House of Shammai say, "Light, and food, and spices, and Havdalah." And the House of Hillel say, "'Light, and spices, and food, and Havdalah."

[6] B. The House of Shammai say, "'Who created the light of the fire.'" And the House of Hillel say, "'Who creates the lights of the fire.'"

The mnemonic serving the list works by the simple reversal of items. If authority A has the order 1, 2, then authority B will give 2, 1. Only entry [3] breaks that pattern. What is at stake in the making of the list is hardly transparent, and why day/wine vs. wine/day, with a parallel, e.g., clean/wash vs. wash/clean, yields a general principle the authorship does not indicate. All we know at this point, therefore, is that we deal with list-makers. But how lists work to communicate principles awaits exemplification.

Through its mode of making connections and drawing conclusions, the next abstract allows us much more explicitly to identify the propositional and essentially philosophical mind that animates the Mishnah. In the following passage, drawn from Mishnah Sanhedrin Chapter Two, the authorship wishes to say that Israel has two heads, one of state, the other of cult, the king and the high priest, respectively, and that these two offices are nearly wholly congruent with one another, with a few differences based on the particular traits of each. Broadly speaking, therefore, our exercise is one of setting forth the genus and the species. The genus is head of holy Israel. The species are king and high priest. Here are the traits in common and those not shared, and the exercise is fully exposed for what it is, an inquiry into the rules that govern, the points of regularity and order, in this minor matter, of political structure. My outline makes the point important in this setting:

MISHNAH SANHEDRIN 2:1–5

1. THE RULES OF THE HIGH PRIEST: SUBJECT TO THE LAW, MARITAL RITES, CONDUCT IN BEREAVEMENT

2:1 A. A high priest judges, and [others] judge him;
B. gives testimony, and [others] give testimony about him;
C. performs the rite of removing the shoe [Deut. 25:7–9], and [others] perform the rite of removing the shoe with his wife.
D. [Others] enter levirate marriage with his wife, but he does not enter into levirate marriage,
E. because he is prohibited to marry a widow.
F. [If] he suffers a death [in his family], he does not follow the bier.
G. "But when [the bearers of the bier] are not visible, he is visible; when they are visible, he is not.
H. "And he goes with them to the city gate," the words of R. Meir.
I. R. Judah says, "He never leaves the sanctuary,
J. "since it says, 'Nor shall he go out of the sanctuary' (Lev. 21:12)."

K. And when he gives comfort to others
L. the accepted practice is for all the people to pass one after another, and the appointed [prefect of the priests] stands between him and the people.
M. And when he receives consolation from others,
N. all the people say to him, "Let us be your atonement."
O. And he says to them, "May you be blessed by Heaven."
P. And when they provide him with the funeral meal,
Q. all the people sit on the ground, while he sits on a stool.

2. The rules of the king: not subject to the law, marital rites, conduct in bereavement

2:2 A. The king does not judge, and [others] do not judge him;
B. does not give testimony, and [others] do not give testimony about him;
C. does not perform the rite of removing the shoe, and others do not perform the rite of removing the shoe with his wife;
D. does not enter into levirate marriage, nor [do his brother] enter levirate marriage with his wife.
E. R. Judah says, "If he wanted to perform the rite of removing the shoe or to enter into levirate marriage, his memory is a blessing."
F. They said to him, "They pay no attention to him [if he expressed the wish to do so]."
G. [Others] do not marry his widow.
H. R. Judah says, "A king may marry the widow of a king.
I. "For so we find in the case of David, that he married the widow of Saul,
J. "For it is said, 'And I gave you your master's house and your master's wives into your embrace' (II Sam. 12:8)."
2:3 A. [If] [the king] suffers a death in his family, he does not leave the gate of his palace.
B. R. Judah says, "If he wants to go out after the bier, he goes out,
C. "for thus we find in the case of David, that he went out after the bier of Abner,
D. "since it is said, 'And King David followed the bier' (2 Sam. 3:31)."
E. They said to him, "This action was only to appease the people."
F. And when they provide him with the funeral meal, all the people sit on the ground, while he sits on a couch.

3. Special rules pertinent to the king because of his calling

2:4 A. [The king] calls out [the army to wage] a war fought by choice on the instructions of a court of seventy-one.
B. He [may exercise the right to] open a road for himself, and [others] may not stop him.
C. The royal road has no required measure.
D. All the people plunder and lay before him [what they have grabbed], and he takes the first portion.
E. "He should not multiply wives to himself" (Deut. 17:17)—only eighteen.
F. R. Judah says, "He may have as many as he wants, so long as they do not entice him [to abandon the Lord (Deut. 7:4)]."
G. R. Simeon says, "Even if there is only one who entices him [to abandon the Lord]—lo, this one should not marry her."
H. If so, why is it said, "He should not multiply wives to himself"?
I. Even though they should be like Abigail [1 Sam. 25:3].
J. "He should not multiply horses to himself" (Deut. 17:16)—only enough for his chariot.
K. "Neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold" (Deut. 17:16)—only enough to pay his army.
L. "And he writes out a scroll of the Torah for himself" (Deut. 17:17)
M. When he goes to war, he takes it out with him; when he comes back, he brings it back with him; when he is in session in court, it is with him; when he is reclining, it is before him,
N. as it is said, "And it shall be with him, and he shall read in it all the days of his life" (Deut. 17:19).
2:5 A. [Others may] not ride on his horse, sit on his throne, handle his scepter.
B. And [others may] not watch him while he is getting a haircut, or while he is nude, or in the bath-house,
C. since it is said, "You shall surely set him as king over you" (Deut. 17:15)—that reverence for him will be upon you.

The subordination of Scripture to the classification-scheme is self-evident. Scripture supplies facts. The traits of things—kings, high priests—dictate classification-categories on their own, without Scripture's dictate.

The philosophical cast of mind is amply revealed in this essay, which in concrete

terms effects a taxonomy, a study of the genus, national leader, and its two species, [1] king, [2] high priest: how are they alike, how are they not alike, and what accounts for the differences. The premise is that national leaders are alike and follow the same rule, except where they differ and follow the opposite rule from one another. But that premise also is subject to the proof effected by the survey of the data consisting of concrete rules, those systemically inert facts that here come to life for the purposes of establishing a proposition. By itself, the fact that, e.g., others may not ride on his horse, bears the burden of no systemic proposition. In the context of an argument constructed for nomothetic, taxonomic purposes, the same fact is active and weighty. The whole depends upon three premises: (1) the importance of comparison and contrast, with the supposition that (2) like follows the like, and the unlike follows the opposite, rule; and (3) when we classify, we also hierarchize, which yields the argument from hierarchical classification: if this, which is the lesser, follows rule X, then that, which is the greater, surely should follow rule X. And that is the whole sum and substance of the logic of Listenwissenschaft as the Mishnah applies that logic in a practical way.

If I had to specify a single mode of thought that established connections between one fact and another, it is in the search for points in common and therefore also points of contrast. We seek connection between fact and fact, sentence and sentence, in the subtle and balanced rhetoric of the Mishnah, by comparing and contrasting two things that are like and not alike. At the logical level, too, the Mishnah falls into the category of familiar philosophical thought. Once we seek regularities, we propose rules. What is like another thing falls under its rule, and what is not like the other falls under the opposite rule. Accordingly, as to the species of the genus, so far as they are alike, they share the same rule. So far as they are not alike, each follows a rule contrary to that governing the other. So the work of analysis is what produces connection, and therefore the drawing of conclusions derives from comparison and contrast: the and, the equal. The proposition then that forms the conclusion concerns the essential likeness of the two offices, except where they are different, but the subterranean premise is that we can explain both likeness and difference by appeal to a principle of fundamental order and unity. To make these observations concrete, we turn to the case at hand. The important contrast comes at the outset. The high priest and king fall into a single genus, but speciation, based on traits particular to the king, then distinguishes the one from the other. All of this exercise is conducted essentially independently of Scripture; the classifications derive from the system, are viewed as autonomous constructs; traits of things define classifications and dictate what is like and what is unlike.

Now that we have seen how the Mishnah's fundamental mode of setting forth propositions appealed to the logic and structure deriving from Listenwissenschaft, specifically, the logic of analogy and contrast, we undertake a more difficult exercise. It is to prove that analogical-contrastive logic not only accounts for the document's formal traits but also explains how the document's authorship reached the conclusions that it presents to us. For that purpose, I demonstrate that it is through appeal to analogical-contrastive logic that the Mishnah's authorship reached conclusions, deriving from Scripture, upon which it built an entire tractate. For that purpose I turn to the conception of maddaf-uncleanness, which is paramount in Mishnah Zabim. I shall show that that generative conception emerged in a process of analogy and contrast, through four successive steps, from a proposition set forth in Scripture. Accordingly, what we shall see in acute detail is precisely how the Mishnah's analogical-contrastive reasoning actually worked.

The exercise in analogical-contrast exegesis turns to the concept of maddaf-uncleanness, which is stated at M. Zab. 5:2 as follows:

> Whatever is carried above the Zab is unclean. And whatever the Zab is carried upon is clean, except for something which is suitable for sitting and lying, and except for man.

This rule is illustrated with cases in which the finger of a Zab is underneath stones

and a clean person is above them. The clean person is made unclean so that he imparts uncleanness at two removes and unfitness at one still further remove. If food and drink, a bed or a chair, and a maddaf-article not used for sitting and lying—are located above the stones with the Zab below, they impart uncleanness at one remove and unfitness at one remove. If the bed and chair are below, and the Zab above, they impart uncleanness at two removes and unfitness at one. If food, drink, and maddaf-objects are below and the Zab is above, they remain clean. Now this rule is treated as beyond dispute, and its details are taken for ranted. The Tosefta's version (T. Zab. 5:1A) concurs that food, drink, and maddaf-objects above a Zab are subject to a more stringent rule than food, drink, and maddaf-objects underneath a Zab, while a bed or chair underneath a Zab are subject to a more strict rule than a bed or chair located above a Zab.

In asking about the origins of this rather complex notion, we find no assistance whatever either in attribution, for all parties agree on the matter, or in attestations, for there is nor reference to the matter in the whole of the Mishnaic Division of Purities in which the principle of maddaf is at issue. The important point, then, is the distinction between what is carried above the Zab and what is carried below. If something not used for lying or sitting, inclusive of food and drink, is located above a Zab, it is clean. Only a bed or chair located below a Zab will be unclean, only because of bearing his weight even without directly touching him.

When we find a conception clearly present in the foundations or originating at the earliest strata of Mishnaic thought, we have to ask whether or not said conception may originate in Scripture. In the present case, by a very brief series of logical steps, the conception of maddaf-uncleanness, with its distinction between a chair or a bed below, and objects not used for sitting or lying below a Zab, and a chair or a bed above, and objects not used for sitting or lying above, a Zab, indeed emerges from Scripture itself. The process by which this rather complex conception emerges, moreover, is not through formal exegesis but through the hypothetical-logical reconstruction of the analogical-contrastive mode of exegesis.

Let us now proceed to the relevant Scriptural passage and its layers of meaning. At the outset, I cite the verse and restate what it says in simple language. The secondary meaning of each verse is attained by generalizing upon the plain and unadorned statement in the Scriptural verse itself. There is then the tertiary meaning, the point at which I introduce conceptions drawn from our tractate. I believe that, in the main, principles at a second level of exegesis from Scripture, that is, tertiary meanings, represent little more than a further generalization of what Scripture says, on the one hand, and the (now surely eisegetical) introduction of a few simple and obvious distinctions necessitated or invited by that generalization, on the other. In some instances there is yet a fourth level of meaning, and this invariably is drawn by me from Mishnah-Tosefta.

The exercise is meant to demonstrate that each and every proposition of Mishnah-Tosefta derives either directly or indirectly, through processes of close reasoning, generalization, and secondary logical exegesis, from Scripture itself. At each point at which our abstract exercise produces a principle found in the Mishnah, the appropriate pericope is designated. The relationship of the Mishnah's unattributed pericopae to Scripture is then spelled out in detail in the following section. The net result is hypothetically to demonstrate in close detail that this aspect of the law of Zabim is little more than a logical expansion of Scripture, and that each such expansion stands in close logical expansion of Scripture, and that each such expansion stands in close logical relationship to the foregoing, so that the result, at the end, is a very tight sequence of logical-exegetical steps. (All Mishnah references are to Mishnah Zabim.)

Scriptural Verse

> Lev. 15:4: Every bed on which he who has the discharge lies shall be unclean. And everything on which he sits shall be unclean.

Clear Implication (Plain meaning)

The Zab imparts uncleanness by lying on a bed or by sitting on a chair.

Secondary Meaning

1. The Zab imparts uncleanness to objects which can be used for lying or sitting.
2. The Zab imparts uncleanness to objects used for lying or sitting by exerting the pressure of his weight on said objects.

Tertiary Meaning

A. The uncleanness of the Zab is transmitted by pressure.
B. Pressure is exerted through lying and sitting.
C. Other modes of exerting pressure, standing, leaning, being suspended, by analogy to lying and sitting, likewise transfer the uncleanness of the Zab to another object.
D. Pressure exerted by a lean person upon an object made unclean by a Zab will in like manner transfer the uncleanness from the object or the Zab to the clean person.

Mishnah
C: expressed in Mishnah Zabim 2:4 (3:1–3, 4:1–7).
D: expressed in Mishnah Zabim 3:1–3, 4:1, 5, 5:1–5.

Lev. 15:5: And any one who touches his bed shall wash his clothes and bathe himself in water and be unclean until the evening.

Touching the Zab makes a person unclean. His clothes are unclean.

Secondary Meaning

3. The Zab's uncleanness is transferred by contact,
   a. either a clean person's touching the Zab
   b. or the Zab's touching a clean person.
4. One who is made unclean by the Zab imparts uncleanness to his clothing.

Tertiary Meaning

E. One made unclean by the Zab makes utensils unclean.
F. Said utensils are cleaned by immersion.
G. Since Scripture specifies that touching the bed or the Zab (Lev. 15:7) effects the transfer of uncleanness, and since Scripture specifies that sitting or lying also effects the transfer of uncleanness, and therefore touching without exerting pressure of exerting pressure without touching imparts uncleanness.

Mishnah

E: expressed in Mishnah Zabim 2:4
G: expressed in Mishnah Zabim 5:1–9

Lev. 15:6: And whoever sits on anything on which he who has the discharge has sat shall wash his clothes and bathe himself in water and be unclean until the evening.

Sitting on the bed or chair made unclean by the Zab makes a person unclean. His clothes are unclean.

Secondary Meaning

5. The object used for sitting or lying to which the Zab has imparted uncleanness is unclean in exactly the same measure as the Zab himself.

Tertiary Meaning

H. Since said object is unclean exactly as the Zab, is unclean, it therefore transfers uncleanness as does the Zab, that is, if one exerts pressure on it (the plain meaning) or if one touches it, or if it touches the clean person or exerts pressure on the clean person.
I. One made unclean by the unclean bed of the Zab makes utensils unclean. Said utensils are cleaned by immersion.

Mishnah

5: M. 2:4C–D.
H: M. 2:4C–D (3:1–3, 4:1–7).
I: M. 2:4C–D.

Lev. 15:7: And whoever touches the body of him who has the discharge shall wash his clothes and bathe himself in water and be unclean until the evening.

Touching the person of the Zab imparts uncleanness. The clothes are unclean.

Secondary Meaning

6. There is no difference between touching the bed of the Zab (Lev. 15:5) and touching the person of the Zab (Lev. 15:7). The consequences are the same in all regards.

Mishnah

6: expressed in M. Zab. 5:1

Lev. 15:8: And if he who has the discharge spits on one who is clean, then he shall wash his clothes and bathe himself in water and be unclean until the evening.

The spit of the Zab is unclean exactly as is the Zab or his bed. The clothing of the person spat upon by the Zab is made unclean.

Secondary Meaning

7. Fluids that exude from the Zab are unclean exactly as is his body or the bed he sits upon, etc.

Tertiary Meaning

J. The ways in which the Zab and the bed made unclean by the Zab transfer uncleanness apply also tot he body fluids, so far as these modes of transfer are relevant: 1. touching, 2. carrying (below, Lev. 15:10b).

Mishnah

7: expressed in Mishnah Zabim 5:6, 5:7

Lev. 15:9: And any saddle on which he who has the discharge rides shall be unclean. The saddle ridden upon by the Zab is unclean.

Secondary Meaning

8. Since the saddle is dealt with apart from the bed and chair, it is subject to a distinctive set of rules.

Mishnah

8: expressed in Mishnah Zabim 5:8

Lev. 15:10a: And whoever touches anything that was under him shall be unclean until the evening.

An object located underneath a Zab is unclean.

Secondary Meaning

9. I take it that the simple meaning is derived by treating Lev. 15:10a as a continuation of Lev. 15:9, which is to say, "A saddle on which a Zab has ridden is unclean, and whoever touches anything on which a Zab rides (or: has ridden) is unclean."(But if we read the verse disjunctively, then it bears a different meaning. Mere location of an object beneath a Zab—even if he is not touching it, and even if he is not riding on it—imparts uncleanness to the object. Accordingly, we take account of the spatial relationships of objects to a Zab.)
10. And this yields the clearly required notion (L) that an object used for sitting, lying, or riding which is located beneath a Zab is unclean, even though the Zab has not sat, lain, or ridden on said object.

Tertiary Meaning

K. Touching or carrying the saddle produces uncleanness, as specified.
L. Touching an object located underneath a Zab, even though said object is not touched by the Zab and even though said object is not directly sat, lain, or ridden upon by the Zab but merely bears the weight of his body, imparts uncleanness so that the formerly clean person is made unclean and furthermore makes his clothing unclean, and, by extension, imparts uncleanness to utensils in general.

Fourth Level of Meaning

i. An object used for sitting and lying which is located underneath the Zab is subject to the uncleanness imparted by the Zab to objects upon which he has sat or lain, etc. It follows that the same sort of object located above the Zab is not subject to the uncleanness imparted by the Zab to objects used for sitting and lying.
ii. An object not used for sitting and lying located beneath the Zab (but not touched by him or subjected to the pressure of his body-weight) is not unclean.
iii. And, it follows in the rule of opposites, an object not used for sitting and lying which is located above the Zab will be unclean in some way or degree, not specified.

Mishnah

9–10: expressed in Mishnah Zabim 5:1–3.
K: expressed in Mishnah Zabim 5:8.
L: expressed in Mishnah Zabim 5:1–3.
i: expressed in Mishnah Zabim 5:1–2.
ii: expressed in Mishnah Zabim 5:1.
iii: expressed in Mishnah Zabim 5:1–2.

Lev. 15:10b: And whoever carries such a thing shall wash his clothes and bathe himself in water and be unclean until the evening.

Carrying an object used for riding, sitting, or lying, and made unclean by the Zab makes the clean person who carries said object unclean. He makes his clothing unclean.

Secondary Meaning

11. The uncleanness of the Zab is conveyed through carriage. Specifically, if one carries an object, such as a bed or chair, made unclean by the Zab, one is made unclean as if he touched the Zab or as if he was subjected to the weight or pressure of the Zab or of an object made unclean by the Zab. This seems to me to follow naturally from the concept of pressure, since it is not possible to carry something without bearing its weight.

Tertiary Meaning

M. A person or an object which a Zab carries is made unclean. That is, just as there is no difference between touching the Zab or being touched by him, placing pressure upon the Zab or having the Zab's pressure applied to a clean person, so there is no difference between carrying the Zab and being carried by him.
N. The person made unclean in this way imparts uncleanness to his clothing, therefore to utensils.

Fourth Level of Meaning

iv. The person made unclean in these several ways makes his clothing unclean. Clearly, that is the case when the uncleanness of the Zab is transmitted to the person. It will follow, therefore, that when the Zab touches or exerts pressure on a clean person, the person is made unclean, and the clothing on the person is made unclean. Accordingly, it is when the clean person is subject to the uncleanness of the Zab, etc., that his clothing is made unclean: "he renders utensils unclean." When the person is no longer subject to the uncleanness of the Zab, he (of course) remains unclean. But he no longer will make his clothing unclean.

Mishnah

As above, Lev. 15:10a.
iv: M. 5:1, Joshua.

Lev. 15:11: Any one whom he that has the discharge touches without having rinsed his hands shall wash his clothes and bathe himself in water and be unclean until the evening.

The unclean person imparts uncleanness through touching. The person made unclean thereby transmits uncleanness to clothing.

Secondary Meaning

I see nothing in this verse that is both relevant to Zabim and new.

Lev. 15:12: And the earthen vessel which he who has the discharge touches shall be broken. And every vessel of wood shall be rinsed in water.

Earthen, or clay, utensils cannot be cleaned by rinsing, but only by breaking. Wooden utensils can be cleaned by immersion.

Secondary Meaning

12. Wooden vessels are subject to a different rule from earthen ones. That rule, moreover, will be the same as affects any other utensil which is cleaned through immersion.

Now to the Mishnah proper the entries that follow relate to, and I think are generated by, the primary allegation of Scripture or its logical developments, as specified.

1. M. 2:4: The Zab imparts uncleanness to the bed in five ways so that the bed imparts uncleanness to man and garments: standing, and sitting, lying, suspended, and leaning. The bed imparts uncleanness to man in seven ways so that he makes clothing unclean: standing, sitting, lying, suspended, leaning, contact, and carrying.

(Compare M. Kel. 1:3.)

1. The rule is specific, that the Zab imparts uncleanness to the bed in the specified five ways. The second component is distinct. How does the bed transmit uncleanness to the clean man? Omitted from consideration: How does the Zab impart uncleanness to the clean man? In point of fact, the Zab transmits uncleanness through touching and through being carried (= exerting pressure).

Sifra Mesora Zabim 3:1–3: Pressure exerted by Zab, even if he sits on top of a heavy stone, imparts uncleanness.

Sifra Mesora Zabim 2:7: If Zab lay down

on chair, sat on bed, stands or is suspended, they are unclean = M. 2:4.

2. Sifra Mesora Zabim 11:1–2: Man who touches bed imparts uncleanness to clothing, but bed which touches bed does not impart uncleanness to clothing. Bed imparts uncleanness when under the Zab to impart uncleanness to man and clothing, but man under the Zab does not impart uncleanness to man and clothing.

2. The Zab imparts uncleanness when he touches a bed. The bed touching a bed does not impart uncleanness to clothing. The bed under the Zab imparts uncleanness as a bed, man does not.

Perhaps the several contrasts are based solely upon those established in Scripture, specifically, objects used for lying and sitting located underneath the Zab impart uncleanness to clothing, Lev. 15:10a. Man is not used for sitting and lying, therefore when located under the Zab, he does not. Along these same lines, Scriptures is clear, Lev. 15:5, that man who touches the bed washes his clothes—therefore imparts uncleanness to clothing (= utensils). Scripture is silent on the affect upon clothing of a bed which touches a bed made unclean by a Zab. It will have followed that what is stated explicitly at Lev. 15:5 then deliberately means to exclude what is omitted, which is the status of the bed which touches the bed. This is, of course, rather acute, since Scripture speaks of common occurrences, and it is difficult for a bed to reach out and touch another bed; Scripture's use of touching naturally is in the context of animate creatures.

3. M. 5:2: Whatever is carried above the Zab is unclean. Whatever the Zab is carried upon, but which is not touched by him, is clean, except for something used for sitting and lying (Lev. 15:10a) and except for man who carries the Zab (Lev. 15:10b). + T. 5:1.

Sifra Mesora Zabim III:3–7. Food, drink, utensils not used for sitting and lying which are above the Zab are made unclean on that account, proved by Simeon.

3. The important point here is the distinction between what is carried above the Zab and what is carried below him, without touching him. In the former case, there is uncleanness, and this applies, specifically, to food, drink and objects not used for lying and sitting (maddaf). If these are carried below the Zab, they are clean. Only man and bed and chair below the Zab are made unclean because of their serving to carry his weight even without directly touching him.

The illustration, M. 5: 2L-M, further indicates that what is unclean above the Zab—food, drink, maddaf (an object not used for lying and sitting)—is unclean in the first remove.

The principle is dual: (1) What is carried underneath the Zab is unclean, except for lying and sitting. (2) What is carried above the Zab is unclean. The relationship to Scripture is not self-evident. On the one side, we may readily account for the first principle. That an object used for lying and sitting which was under the Zab is unclean is specified at Lev. 15:10a. But the rule excludes objects not used for lying and sitting. Perhaps the distinction begins at Lev. 15:9. The saddle on which the Zab rides is unclean. Lev. 15:10a, continuing this point, then specifies that whoever touches anything that was under him—thus, that has served him for sitting—is unclean. And, by exclusion therefrom, whoever touches something which has been located under the Zab but which the Zab has not used for sitting is not unclean. Accordingly, the object itself, if not used for sitting, does not become unclean if the Zab is located above it.

But whence the notion of maddaf? That is, how do we know that an object not used for lying and sitting and located above the Zab is unclean? At first glance, it appears that we come to the fourth level of meaning imputed to Lev. 15:10a (i, iii). (1) What is unclean beneath the Zab is not unclean above him. (2) Then: What is not unclean beneath the Zab is unclean above him. Objects not used for sitting and lying food and drink (2) are unclean above, because they (1) are clean below, the Zab. Thus: Objects used for sitting and lying are clean above, because they are unclean below, the Zab.

But the problem of maddaf is not so readily settled. We have to ascertain the meaning associated with the word in the earliest

assigned pericopae. With the help of Kasovsky,[1] let us rapidly review the several meanings assigned to the word maddaf. The word is familiar as the name of an object—the bird trap at M. Kel. 23:5; the smoker of the bees (M. Kel. 16:7), required by context in both cases. This tractate, by contrast, knows that word to mean "an object, not used for lying or sitting, located above the Zab," and we need not review the passages in which the word appears in that meaning (M. Zab. 4:6, 5:2). The third meaning is "a status as to uncleanness," a definition to be made more precise when we return to M. Par. 10:1–2, and M. Toh. 8:2. The former requires the meaning, "A status as to uncleanness related to midras but of lower degree of uncleanness than midras." Thus M. Par. 10:1, assigned to Yavneans, on what can be made unclean with corpse-uncleanness and whether that sort of object likewise is unclean with maddaf-uncleanness)

Accordingly, in the context of M. Par. 10:1–2, maddaf can only mean, "a status of uncleanness," which, we know, is uncleanness in the first remove, effecting uncleanness for food and liquid. This same meaning is absolutely required at M. Toh. 8:2: If someone deposits with an *'am ha'ares* a box full of clothing, Yose says, "When it is tightly packed, it is unclean with midras-uncleanness, and it is is not tightly packed, it is unclean with maddaf-uncleanness." Accordingly, once more, midras-uncleanness is set into contrast with maddaf-uncleanness. In this instance the point is that the 'am ha'ares is unclean as a Zab. If a Zab shifts an object not used for sitting or lying, we know, the object suffers maddaf-uncleanness and renders food and drink unclean. M. Ed. 6:2 further has a dispute of Joshua and Nehunya b. Elinathan with Eliezer, in which it is taken for granted, tangentially and within the structure of argument: "The un-cleanness of living beings is greater than the uncleanness of corpses, for a living being imparts uncleanness, by lying and sitting, to what is underneath him, so that it conveys uncleanness to man and utensils, and also conveys maddaf-uncleanness to what is above him, so that is conveys uncleanness to food and liquid, a mode of transferring uncleanness which a corpse does not convey." The same authorities—Joshua and Eliezer—are at M. Par. 10:1–2, and moreover, Yose continues the matter, at M. Toh. 8:2, taking the rule for granted, just as do Joshua and Eliezer. We need not review in detail Tosefta's usages of the same word, since all occur in the context of the correlative Mishnaic pericopae (T. Par. 10:2, 3, T. Toh. 9:4, T. Zab. 3:3, 5:1).

The two senses in which the word is used of course are complementary. M. Par. and M. Toh. know maddaf as a status as to uncleanness contrasted to midras, and M. Zab. uses the word to refer to objects which can enter that very same status as to uncleanness. Our translation in the present tractate has been required by its context. But the meaning in point of fact is complementary to that necessitated by the context of M. Par. and M. Toh.: What can become unclean with maddaf-uncleanness—an object not used for lying and sitting and hence not susceptible to midras-uncleanness (a point familiar throughout our order e.g., Kelim Chapter Twenty-Four)—here is called maddaf. And M. Par. and M. Toh. know maddaf as that uncleanness imparted to something from something (used for lying and sitting) susceptible to midras. Our tractate, moreover, hastens to add: The status of maddaf-uncleanness is attained when an object not used for lying or sitting (also food or drink, explicitly included as well) is located above a Zab. Maddaf as the opposite of midras, of course, is contained in the pericopae of M. Toh. in particular, but also, with slight eisegesis, at M. Par.

The contrast between midras and maddaf, strikingly, is precisely the same the contrast as I have hypothetically imputed to the exegetes of Lev. 15:10A at i, iii. Indeed, midras and maddaf express exactly the same idea as is spelled out in the circumlocutions above. Our invocation, at that point, of the rule of opposites therefore is justified by the result of the present analysis of the consistent contrast, drawn in M., between midras and maddaf. The concept of maddaf, in its two, complementary senses, most certainly is attested by Joshua and Eliezer at M. Ed. and M. Par. Because of the givenness of the idea of M. Par., at both pericopae

assigned to Eliezer and Joshua, I am inclined to suppose that the concept of maddaf-uncleanness and of objects susceptible no to midras, because they are not used for lying and sitting, but, under the specified circumstance, to maddaf-uncleanness, hence maddaf-objects, originates before 70.

4. M. 5:6: He who touches the Zab, Zabah, menstruating woman, woman after childbirth, mesora, or a bed or chair on which any of these have lain or sat. Touching and shifting, carrying and being carried, are equivalent.

+ T. 5:3: utensils are in the first remove.

4. The pericope so far as it deals with modes of transfer makes two points.

First, while one is touching these sources, he is able to impart uncleanness at two removes, unfitness at one. That is to say, just as at M. 5:1, he is like a Father of uncleanness, so far as food for heave-offering is concerned.

Second, touching is deemed equivalent to shifting, carrying, and being carried.

That the uncleanness of the Zab is transferred to one who touches the Zab (etc.) is stated explicitly at Lev. 15:5. That one who carries such a thing is made unclean is stated at Lev. 15:10b.

The sole new point has to do with the inclusion of shifting as a mode of transfer of uncleanness. This is probably generated by the analogy to bearing the weight of the Zab, that is, carrying. the inclusion of shifting as a mode of transfer of uncleanness derives simply from the extension of Scripture's stated modes. One can hardly carry without shifting the object. The sole open question is whether we include even derivatives of the pressure of the Zab or of pressure upon the Zab, that is, vibration, movement which takes place indirectly and not directly. We do not, as the Ushans state.

5. M. 5:7: He who touches the flux of the Zab, his spit, his semen, his urine, and the blood of the menstruating woman (imparts uncleanness at two remove, etc.) All the same is touching and moving. Eliezer: Also carrying.

5.1. The specified excretions are unclean just as the Zab is unclean.

2. They transfer uncleanness just as the Zab transfers uncleanness, that is, through contact.
3. Shifting is equivalent to contact.

Touching the spit of the Zab effects the transfer of the Zab's uncleanness, so Lev. 15:8. The secondary point is the inclusion of other substances. The issue of carrying as equivalent to contact of course is not of equivalent antiquity.

6. T. 5:2B: Phlegm, mucous, saliva, and snot of Zab are like his spit. Tear, blood of wound, milk of woman, blood of mouth and penis are unclean only in the first remove. Flux, spit, urine are unclean as Fathers. Semen of Zab: Eliezer—does not impart uncleanness when carried; and sages—imparts uncleanness when carried, because urine is contained therein.

Sifra Mesora-Zabim 1:7–8: Zab imparts uncleanness through white flux, not through red flow (blood from penis).

Sifra Mesora-Zabim 1:9–13: Flux itself is unclean. Blood which exudes form the penis is not unclean as flux. His urine is unclean. Sweat, rancid moisture, excrement are not unclean. Nine liquids apply to Zab: secretion, putrid sweat, excrement are clean in all respect; tear, blood, milk impart susceptibility to uncleanness as liquids; flux, spit, urine are unclean as flux.

Sifra Mesora-Zabim 3:8: Phlegm, slaver, and snot are equivalent to spit. Sifra Mesora-Zabim 1:3: Flux derives solely from the genitals, not from the nose or mouth.

There are two issues in the present set, first of all, the notion that the transfer of the Zab's uncleanness takes place not solely through touching the Zab, but also through touching other substances which exude from him. Second, other modes of transfer besides direct contact are of the same effect as direct contact. The matter of touching the Zab's spit is explicit at Lev. 15:8. Accordingly, not only the flux, but also spit is unclean. Then spit supplies an analogy for other such substances which are like it. Flux is like semen; urine derives from the same location. Phlegm, mucus, saliva, snot, all are treated as analogous to spit. The second issues is the analogy between touching and

moving, on which all parties agree. Eliezer wishes to treat carrying as equivalent mode of transfer of uncleanness. His basis, surely, will be the diverse rulings which treat touching, shifting, and carrying as equivalent. At T. 5:2B, an Eliezer wishes to exclude semen of the Zab. If this is the same Eliezer, then M. 5:7 should contain the equivalent qualification, that is, adding carrying as a mode of transfer of uncleanness, and detaching semen from the opening list. We do not know which Eliezer is before us, one of the Yavneans or one of the Ushans. That is why we cannot adduce the present set as evidence that discussion of the interrelationships of the diverse modes of transfer uncleanness was carried forward at Yavneh, with the secondary notion that the issues were still live at that time. This is suggested by the pointed claim, intruded at M. 5:6, 7, etc., that the diverse modes do produce equivalent effects, or are the same as one another, which suggests that in the background are efforts seriously to distinguish among them. But the main point in Mishnah is that there are diverse modes, and that point derives from the obvious sense of Scripture, which specifies touching or contact, carrying, lying or sitting, generalized into exerting pressure.

7. M. 5:8: He who carries saddle, is carried on it, and moves it, etc.

7. Carrying, being carried on, and moving, the saddle imparts uncleanness as if one were made a Father of uncleanness.

Carrying carrion, purification water sufficient for sprinkling.

+ T. 5:5A.

Here, too, the man is as if he were a Father of uncleanness.

M. 5:9: He who eats carrion of clean bird, while it is in his gullet, etc.

+ T. 5:10–12

This item is not relevant to Zabim.

Sifra Mesora-Zabim 4:2–3: Bed and chair impart uncleanness when they are carried.

Sifra Mesora-Zabim 4:1: Whoever touches saddle is unclean, but whoever touches what is under the saddle is not unclean on that account.

Carrying the saddle or being carried on it make a person unclean, so Lev. 15:10 states explicitly. That the bed and chair which are carried impart uncleanness is also at Lev. 15:10b. Touching the saddle produces uncleanness, so Lev. 15:10a. Lev. 15:10b then specifies that whoever carries something which has been underneath a Zab is unclean, which then is exclusive of merely touching the saddle. Nothing in this set brings us significantly outside the boundaries of Scriptural meaning, so far as I can see. (We omit reference to the matter of carrion, which is not within the thematic limits of our tractate.)

8. M. 5:10: He who touches a dead creeping thing, semen, one made unclean by corpse-uncleanness, mesora during period of counting clean days, purification water insufficient for sprinkling, carrion, and saddle . . . This is the general rule: Whatever touches any of all the Fathers of uncleanness listed in the Torah imparts uncleanness at one remove and renders unfit at one. Man in contact with a Father of uncleanness, imparts uncleanness at two removes, unfitness at one. Or: except for man, who, as a corpse, makes that which touches it into a Father of uncleanness and so that which is in contact with a corpse imparts uncleanness at two removes and unfitness at one more.

8. In all these cases, the one who touches the source of uncleanness is unclean only in the first remove, not functioning as if he were a Father of uncleanness.

Any object, other then man, in contact with a Father of uncleanness, is in the first remove of uncleanness.

M. 5:11: He who has a seminal emission is like one who has touched a dead creeping thing. He who has sexual relations with a menstruating woman is like one who is unclean by reason of corpse-uncleanness to bed and chair so that they render food and drink unclean, which the former does not accomplish.

M. 5:12: Ten items which are in the second remove of uncleanness and therefore render heave-offering unfit. Sifra Mesora-Zabim 2:8–13: Seminal emission does not cause uncleanness. Person unclean through mega, corpse, does not impart uncleanness to bed and chair.

The last units, M. 5:10–12, complete the

construction of M. 5:6–9 by specifying sources of uncleanness, touching which leaves a person unclean only in the first remove, then in the second. The set contains no attestations, but in fact goes over the specifications of Scripture. What is pointed is the distinction between "whatever touches any of the Fathers of uncleanness" and "man who touches a Father of uncleanness," which is to say, the important point of M. 5:1, 6–9, upon which Joshua's further observation, about the difference between one's state while touching such a Father and after one has ceased to touch the Father, is based. It is, of course, the specification at Lev. 15:5, for the Zab, Lev. 15:21, for the menstruating woman, Lev. 15:27, for the Zab, and the comparison of the woman after childbirth to the menstruating woman, Lev. 12:2, 5, that the person who touches things on which the aforenamed have lain or sat washes his clothes, which leads to the stated conclusion.

Let us now, as I promised, relate the foregoing to M. Zab. 5:2.

M. Zab. 5:2: Whatever is carried above the Zab is unclean. Whatever the Zab is carried upon, but which is not touched by him, is clean, except for something used for sitting and lying (Lev. 15:10a) and except for man who carries the Zab (Lev. 15:10b).

The important point here is the distinction between what is carried above the Zab and what is carried below him, without touching him. In the former case, there is uncleanness, and this applies, specifically, to food, drink and objects not used for lying and sitting (maddaf). If these are carried below the Zab, they are clean. Only man and bed and chair below the Zab are made unclean because of their serving to carry his weight even without directly touching him. The illustration, M. Zab. 5:2L-M, further indicates that what is unclean above the Zab—food, drink, maddaf (an object not used for lying and sitting)—is unclean in the first remove.

Now to repeat, this is how analogical-contrastive reasoning works:

The principle is dual:

1) What is carried underneath the Zab is clean, except for an object used for lying and sitting.

2) What is carried above the Zab is unclean. The relationship to Scripture is not self-evident. On the one side, we may readily account for the first principle. That an object used for lying and sitting which was under the Zab is unclean is specified at Lev. 15:10a. But the rule excludes objects not used for lying and sitting. To review what has been suggested: The distinction begins at Lev. 15:9.

The saddle on which the Zab rides is unclean.

Lev. 15:10a, continuing this point, then specifies that whoever touches anything that was under him—thus, that has served him for sitting—is unclean.

And, by exclusion therefrom, whoever touches something which has been located under the Zab but which the Zab has not used for sitting is not unclean.

Accordingly, the object itself, if not used for sitting, does not become unclean if the Zab is located above it.

But, whence the notion of maddaf? That is, how do we know that an object not used for lying and sitting and located above the Zab is unclean?

We come to the fourth level of meaning imputed to Lev. 15:10a.

1) What is unclean beneath the Zab is not unclean above him.

2) Then: What is not unclean beneath the Zab is unclean above him. Objects not used for sitting and lying, food and drink (2) are unclean above, because they (1) are clean below, the Zab.

Thus: Objects used for sitting and lying are clean above, because they are unclean below, the Zab.

This exercise can readily be repeated for the principles and generative rules of three tractates, Negaim, Niddah, and the remainder of Zabim, all of which to begin with draw out and spell out Scripture's rules and principle for the mesora', the menstruating woman, Zabah, woman after childbirth, and finally, for the Zab, respectively. All deal with sources of uncleanness. Here the Oral Torah is contented to restate and develop through logical exegesis (not merely through formal exegesis, such as at Sifra, which is post facto) what is said in the Priestly Code. The reason is that at the outset the people

among whom the Oral Torah, that is, the Mishnah, originates have no intention whatsoever to augment and enrich the laws of the sources of uncleanness and even those of the transfer of the uncleanness of those sources of uncleanness to men and utensils, food and drink, objects purified by immersion and objects purified by breaking, food which is unconsecrated, which is heave-offering, and which is Holy Tings.

Their original and fresh proposition concerns the locus of uncleanness, which is the world as well as the cult, and the means of removing uncleanness, in the world as well as in the cult. Accordingly, tractates on these matters begin in conception wholly autonomous of, and alien to, the Written Torah, because the Priestly Code, in its ultimate redaction, claims that cleanness and uncleanness are categories of the cultic metaphysic, not of the world outside the cult. The ultimate redactors who make such a claim in behalf of the Temple of course obscure the worldly locus of the laws of uncleanness, e.g., the corpse which lies in the tent imparts uncleanness to the utensils which are in the tent, and this without regard to the use of said utensils in the cult. Menstrual impurity has primary implications for the home, not only for the cult, despite the ultimate redactional claim stated in connection with the pericope of the Zab, the menstruating woman, and the Zabah at Lev. 15:31: Thus you shall keep the people of Israel separate from their uncleanness, lest they die in their uncleanness by defiling my tabernacle that is in their midst (see Jacob Neusner, *Purities* XVI, pp. 208– 211).

It would be an error, however, to conclude that the Oral Torah represented by the Mishnah bears and essentially dual relationship to the Written one, that is, partly exegetical, partly autonomous. Even though tractates Kelim, Ohalot, Parah-Yadayim, Tohorot-Uqsin, Miqvaot-Tebul Yom, and Makhshirin begin in conceptions essentially autonomous of Scripture, while Negaim. Niddah, and Zabim (merely) spell out and develop rules laid down in scripture, all the tractates, whatever the character of their fundamental presuppositions in detail, share an approach which is distinctive to Mishnah in its very origins. All of them take an intense interest in details of cleanness. This fact is what marks them all, whatever their relationship to Scripture, as particular and Pharisaic. Even though everyone in the Land of Israel concurred that the Zab was unclean, not everyone developed the layers of exegesis, the secondary and tertiary conception, producing a tractate such as Zabim. So far as our extant sources tell us, whether or not others, e.g., in the Essene community at Qumran, observed the purity-laws, no on else took equivalent interest in developing the laws of Leviticus Chapters Twelve through Fifteen.

The detailed principles of tractates Negaim, Niddah, and Zabim in no way express conceptions definitive of and distinctive to Pharisaism, such as we observe at tractates Kelim, Parah, Tohorot, Miqvaot, and Makhshirin, and (possibly) at the shank of Ohalot (M. Oh. 3:6–16:2) as well. Authorities before 70, whom we assume are Pharisees, devote time and attention to the elucidation and extension of Scripture's rules. Extant evidence does not suggest that others did so. What is distinctive to the "Oral Torah" which we assume characterizes Pharisaism is detailed attention to matters of uncleanness. Others either took for granted and observed them or took for granted and ignored them. Accordingly, there are tow aspects to the analysis of the relationship of Zabim to Scripture, exegetical and eisegetical. Exegesis of a straight-forward, and (hypothetically) highly logical, sequential character produces Zabim. Not exegesis, but eisegesis imparts to Lev. 15:1–15 such importance that the exegetical enterprise to begin with is undertaken.

JACOB NEUSNER

NOTE

[1] Chayim Yehoshua Kasovsky, *Thesaurus Mishnae* (Jerusalem, 1958), vol. IV, p. 353a.

Monotheism

In Judaism, monotheism refers to the belief in one God, who is all-powerful and just. In Judaism's view, the will of the one, unique God, made manifest through the Torah, governs, and, further, God's will for both private life and public activity is rational. That is to say, within man's understanding of reason, God's will is just. And by "just," sages understood the commonsense meaning: fair, equitable, proportionate, commensurate. In place of fate or impersonal destiny, chance, or simply irrational, inexplicable chaos, God's plan and purpose everywhere come to realization. So the Torah identifies God's will as the active and causative force in the lives of individuals and nations.

Only through appeal to that fundamental principle of one God's imposing a just order can we make sense of the specific convictions of Judaism on any particular subject. Whatever ideas sages propose to account for the situation of Israel in public or the individual in private, whether the resolution of the historical crisis in the coming of the messiah and the nations' standing in judgment by the criterion of the Torah or the advent of the world to come—all of these massive presences in sages' thinking about the here and now, the past and the future, rested on the same conviction: an exact, prevailing justice explained the meaning of all things. It was a reciprocal process because the same reasonable justice ruled small and great transactions without distinction. Not only so, but, for sages, that conviction required an act not of faith but of rational inquiry into the record of reality that Judaism finds in Scripture.

Monotheism is not a matter of arithmetic—one God against many gods. It is a completely different way of explaining the world. Monotheism posits one God, wholly other than humanity, transcendent over nature, in charge of all things, responsible for all reality. And monotheism as set forth by Judaism (and its offspring Christianity and Islam) insists that the one, all powerful God is good, merciful, and just. While a religion of numerous gods finds many solutions to one problem, a religion of only one God presents one to many. Life is seldom fair. Rules rarely work. To explain the reason why, polytheisms adduce multiple causes of chaos, a god per anomaly. Diverse gods do various things, so, it stands to reason, ordinarily outcomes conflict. Monotheism by nature explains many things in a single way. One God rules. Life is meant to be fair, and just rules are supposed to describe what is ordinary, all in the name of that one and only God. So in monotheism a simple logic governs to limit ways of making sense of things. But that logic contains its own dialectics. If one true God has done everything, then, since this God is all-powerful and omniscient, all things are credited to, and blamed on, him. In that case, God can be either good or bad, just or unjust—but not both.

Responding to the generative dialectics of monotheism, Judaism systematically reveals the justice of the one and only God of all creation. God is not only God but also good. Appealing to the facts of Scripture, the Written part of the Torah, in the documents of the Oral part of the Torah, the sages in the first six centuries C.E. constructed a coherent theology, a cogent structure and logical system, to expose the justice of God.

On what basis do the sages of Judaism insist upon the justice of God? To answer the question of the source of probative evidence for the principle that the world is reliable and orderly by reason of justice, we turn to the concrete evidence that they held demonstrated their point. When sages opened Scripture to find out how, in the detail of concrete cases, the judge of all the world is bound by the rules of justice and systematically does justice, like philosophers in natural history, they looked not for the occasional but the enduring: not for the singular moment but the routine pattern. One-shot proof-texts mattered less than governing paradigms. Sages were theologians before they were exegetes, and they were exegetes because they were theologians. So, while proof from specific texts they showed to emerge from details, they used hermeneutics

to hold details together in a single coherent whole. That is why they composed their account of the workings of the principle of measure for measure—whether for divine punishment or for divine reward—out of cases in which God does not intervene, but in which the very nature of things, the ordinary course of events, showed the workings of the principle.

What would suffice, then, to make a point that—we must assume—people in general deem counter-intuitive? For who from Job onward assumed that the ordinary course of everyday events proves the justice (and the goodness) of God? More lost the faith because the here and now violated the rule of justice than gained the faith because it did. So, to begin with, sages framed for themselves what we might call a null-hypothesis, that is to say, a hypothesis that they would test to prove the opposite of what they sought to show. They asked themselves this question: if justice did not govern, how should we know it? The answer is, we should find not a correlation but a disproportion between sin and consequent result, or penalty, between crime and punishment.

The null-hypothesis framed the question of order through justice in its most palpable, material form. It is not enough to show that sin or crime provoke divine response, that God penalizes them. Justice in the here and now counts. The penalty must fit the crime, measure must match measure, and the more exact the result to the cause, the more compelling the proof of immediate and concrete justice as the building block of world order that sages would put forth out of Scripture. That is the point at which justice is transformed from a vague generality—a mere sentiment—to a precise and measurable dimension of the actual social order of morality: how things hold together when subject to tension, at the pressure-points of structure, not merely how they are arrayed in general. Here, in fact, is how God made the world, what is good about the creation that God pronounced good.

That is why, when sages examined the facts of Scripture to establish that principle of rationality and order in conformity to the requirements of justice and equity, what impressed them was not the inevitability but the precision of justice. Scripture portrays the world order as fundamentally just and reasonable, and it does so in countless ways. But Scripture encompasses the complaint of Job and the reflection of Ecclesiastes. Sages for their part identified those cases that transcended generalities and established the facticity of proportionate justice, treating them as not only exemplary but probative. They set forth their proposition and amassed evidence in support of it.

When God judges and sentences, not only is the judgment fair but the penalty fits the crime with frightening precision. But so too, when God judges and awards a decision of merit, the reward proves equally exact. These two together, the match of sin and penalty, meritorious deed and reward, then are shown to explain the point and purpose of one detail after another, and, all together, they add up to the portrait of a world order that is fundamentally and essentially just—the starting point and foundation of all else.

Here is sages' account of God's justice, which is always commensurate, both for reward and punishment, in consequence of which the present permits us to peer into the future with certainty of what is going to happen. What we note is sages' identification of the precision of justice, the exact match of action and reaction, each step in the sin, each step in the response, and, above all, the immediacy of God's presence in the entire transaction. They draw general conclusions from the specifics of the law that Scripture sets forth, and that is where systematic thinking about takes over from exegetical learning about cases (M. Sot. 1:7):

> A. By that same measure by which a person metes out [to others], do they mete out to him:
> B. She primped herself for sin, the Omnipresent made her repulsive.
> C. She exposed herself for sin, the Omnipresent exposed her.
> D. With the thigh she began to sin, and afterward with the belly, therefore the thigh suffers the curse first, and afterward the belly.
> E. But the rest of the body does not escape [punishment].

The course of response of the woman accused of adultery to her drinking of the bitter water that is supposed to produce one

result for the guilty, another for the innocent, is described in Scripture in this language: "If no man has lain with you . . . be free from this water of bitterness that brings the curse. But if you have gone astray . . . then the Lord make you an execration . . . when the Lord makes your thigh fall away and your body swell; may this water . . . pass into your bowels and make your body swell and your thigh fall away" (Num. 5:20–22). This is amplified and expanded, extended to the entire rite, where the woman is disheveled; then the order, thigh, belly, shows the perfect precision of the penalty. What Scripture treats as a case, sages transform into a generalization, so making Scripture yield governing rules. And the main point, that God governs justly, derived from those rules based on the facts of Scripture.

The same passage proceeds to further cases that prove the same point: where the sin begins, there the punishment also commences; but also, where an act of virtue takes its point, there divine reward focuses as well. Merely listing the following names, without spelling out details, for the cognoscenti of Scripture will have made that point: Samson, Absalom, Miriam, Joseph, and Moses. Knowing how Samson and Absalom match, also Miriam, Joseph, and Moses, would then suffice to establish the paired and matched general principles (M. Sot. 1:8):

A. Samson followed his eyes [where they led him], therefore the Philistines put out his eyes, since it is said, "And the Philistines laid hold on him and put out his eyes" (Judg. 16:21).
B. Absalom was proud of his hair, therefore he was hung by his hair [2 Sam. 14:25–26].
C. And since he had sexual relations with ten concubines of his father, therefore they thrust ten spear heads into his body, since it is said, "And ten young men that carried Jacob's armor surrounded and smote Absalom and killed him" (2 Sam. 18:15).
D. And since he stole three hearts—his father's, the court's, and the Israelite's—since it is said, "And Absalom stole the heart of the men of Israel" (2 Sam. 15:6)—therefore three darts were thrust into him, since it is said, "And he took three darts in his hand and thrust them through the heart of Absalom" (2 Sam. 18:14).

Justice requires not only punishment of the sinner or the guilty but reward of the righteous and the good, and so sages find ample, systematic evidence in Scripture for both sides of the equation of justice (M. Sot. 1:9–10):

1:9A. And so is it on the good side:
B. Miriam waited a while for Moses, since it is said, "And his sister stood afar off" (Exod. 2:4), therefore, Israel waited on her seven days in the wilderness, since it is said, "And the people did not travel on until Miriam was brought in again" (Num. 12:15).
1:10A. Joseph had the merit of burying his father, and none of his brothers was greater than he, since it is said, "And Joseph went up to bury his father . . . and there went up with him both chariots and horsemen" (Gen. 50:7, 9).
B. We have none so great as Joseph, for only Moses took care of his [bones].
C. Moses had the merit of burying the bones of Joseph, and none in Israel was greater than he, since it is said, "And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him" (Exod. 13:19).
D. We have none so great as Moses, for only the Holy One blessed be he took care of his [bones], since it is said, "And he buried him in the valley" (Deut. 34:6).
E. And not of Moses alone have they stated [this rule], but of all righteous people, since it is said, "And your righteousness shall go before you. The glory of the Lord shall gather you [in death]" (Is. 58:8).

Scripture provides the main probative evidence for the anticipation that God will match the act of merit with an appropriate reward and the sin with an appropriate punishment. The proposition begins, however, with general observations as to how things are, M. 1:7, and not with specific allusions to proof-texts; the character of the law set forth in Scripture is reflected upon. The accumulated cases yield the generalization.

It follows that Judaism conveys the picture of world order based on God's justice and equity. The categorical structure of the Oral Torah encompasses the components, God and humanity; the Torah; Israel and the nations. The working-system of the Torah finds its dynamic in the struggle between God's plan for creation—to create

a perfect world of justice—and human will. That dialectic embodies in a single paradigm the events contained in the sequences, rebellion, sin, punishment, repentance, and atonement; exile and return; or the disruption of world order and the restoration of world order. None of these categories and propositions is new; anyone familiar with the principal components of the faith and piety of Judaism, the Written Torah, the Oral Torah, and the liturgy of home and synagogue, will find them paramount.

The Torah's formulation of monotheism takes the form of a story. That simple story tells about a world governed by the moral order imposed by God's ultimate reason and justice, set forth in the Torah of Sinai, in oral and written media, and realized by God in Israel. Therein is found the governing, integrating theology of the Torah. The generative doctrine of God's perfect justice in the divine creation and governance of the world is what imparts integrity to the details and proportion to the whole. That story portraying the requirements of justification encompasses the entire tale of humanity in general and its counterpart, Israel in particular. The tale provides a dense record of the reasonable rules that account for what happens in public and, by way of complement and match, at home, to the people and to individuals. The four principles of the Torah's monotheist theology of a just God are these:

1. God formed creation in accord with a plan, which the Torah reveals. World order can be shown by the facts of nature and society set forth in that plan to conform to a pattern of reason based upon justice. Those who possess the Torah—Israel—know God and those who do not—the gentiles—reject God in favor of idols. What happens to each of the two sectors of humanity, respectively, responds to their relationship with God. Israel in the present age is subordinate to the nations, because God has designated the gentiles as the medium for penalizing Israel's rebellion, intending through Israel's subordination and exile to provoke Israel to repent. Private life as much as the public order conforms to the principle that God rules justly in a creation of perfection and stasis.

2. The perfection of creation, realized in the rule of exact justice, is signified by the timelessness of the world of human affairs, their conformity to a few enduring paradigms that transcend change (theology of history). No present, past, or future marks time, but only the recapitulation of those patterns. Perfection is further embodied in the unchanging relationships of the social commonwealth (theology of political economy), which assure that scarce resources, once allocated, remain in stasis. A further indication of perfection lies in the complementarity of the components of creation, on the one side, and, finally, the correspondence between God and humans, in God's image (theological anthropology), on the other.

3. Israel's condition, public and personal, marks flaws in creation. What disrupts perfection is the sole power capable of standing on its own against God's power, and that is human will. What people control and God cannot coerce is the human capacity to form intention and therefore to choose either arrogantly to defy, or humbly to love, God. People defy God, and the sin that results from this rebellion flaws creation and disrupts world order (theological theodicy). The paradigm of the rebellion of Adam in Eden governs, the act of arrogant rebellion leading to exile from Eden thus accounting for the condition of humanity. But, as in the original transaction of alienation and consequent exile, God retains the power to encourage repentance through punishing human arrogance. In mercy, moreover, God exercises the power to respond to repentance with forgiveness, that is, a change of attitude evoking a counterpart change. Since, commanding their own will, people also have the power to initiate the process of reconciliation with God, through repentance, an act of humility, they may restore the perfection of that order that through arrogance they have marred.

4. God ultimately will restore that perfection that embodied the divine plan for creation. In the work of restoration, death that comes about by reason of sin will die, the dead will be raised and judged for their deeds in this life , and most of them, having been justified, will go on to eternal life

in the world to come. The paradigm of humanity restored to Eden is realized in Israel's return to the land of Israel. In that world or age to come, however, the sector of humanity that through the Torah knows God will encompass all of people. Idolaters will perish, and humanity that comprises Israel at the end will know the one true God and spend eternity in God's light.

If we translate into the narrative of Israel, from the beginning to the calamity of the destruction of the (first) Temple, what is set forth in both abstract and concrete ways in the formulation of monotheism that we find in the Oral Torah, we turn out to state a reprise of the theology of monotheism that we find in the Written Torah. This is, in particular, located in the Authorized History laid out in Genesis through Kings and amplified by the principal prophets. Furthermore, the liturgy of synagogue and home recapitulates characteristic modes of thought of the Oral Torah and reworks its distinctive constructions of exemplary figures, events, and conceptions.

So here, beginning with the integrating basics, encompassing the entire expanse of creation and humanity, from first to last things, are the ideas that impart structure and order and sustain the whole. Starting with the doctrine of world order that is just and concluding with eternal life, here is the simple logic that animates all the parts and makes them cohere. The generative categories prove not only imperative and irreducible but also logically sequential. Each of the four parts of the theology of monotheism—[1] the perfectly just character of world order, [2] indications of its perfection, [3] sources of its imperfection, [4] media for the restoration of world order and their results—belongs in its place; set in any other sequence, the four units become incomprehensible.

In spelling out in concrete terms the theology of monotheism, sages set forth the rational version of the stories of Scripture: creation and its flaws, Eden and the loss of Eden. But their logic, involving as it did the insistence on a perfect and unchanging world, created by the perfect and just God, sought out what complements and completes the account. Thus, they taught how Eden is to be recovered. Adam and his counterpart, Israel, in the cosmic drama acted out every day, here and now, in the humble details of Israel's ordinary life embodied the simple story of the world: unflawed creation, spoiled by man's act of will, restored by Israel's act of repentance. The rationality of an orderly and balanced world set forth in the Oral Torah comes to full realization in the match of Eden and the land of Israel, Adam and Israel, the paradise and paradise lost, with one difference. Adam had no Torah, Israel does. Adam could not regain Eden. But Israel can and will regain the land. Sages' teleology imposed itself on eschatology, so forming a theory of last things corresponding to first things, in a theology of restoration.

Private life conformed; it too revealed that same flawless character that the world does—when reason takes over, and exception is explained (away). Exchanges of goods—scarce resources—likewise aimed at a perfect balance. Time, for sages, stood still, history bore no meaning, all things could be shown to exemplify rules and embody regularities. Scripture then conveyed les-sons of not history and its admonitions but logic—the logic of creation and its inner tension—and its inexorable result.

Sages in these proportionate, balanced and measured components revealed a world of rules and exposed a realm of justice and therefore rational explanation. It was the kingdom of heaven, so sages called it, meaning the kingdom of God. They accordingly conceived of a philosophical Eden out of Scripture's account—its authorized history of the world from Eden to the return to Zion. What the observed facts of nature taught philosophers, the revealed facts of Scripture taught Judaism's sages. Therein theology differs from philosophy—but, in the Oral Torah in particular, the difference is there and there alone and no where else.

A single statement of that view in general suffices to call attention to the regularities and order, the correspondences, that sages found linked nature and humankind in a perfect match. Stated very simply, to sages, humanity and nature correspond. God created the same matching traits in nature and in humans (Abot deR. Natan XXXI:III.1):

A. R. Yose the Galilean says, "Whatever the Holy One, blessed be he, created on earth, he created also in man. To what may the matter be compared? To someone who took a piece of wood and wanted to make many forms on it but had no room to make them, so he was distressed. But someone who draws forms on the earth can go on drawing and can spread them out as far as he likes.
B. "But the Holy One, blessed be he, may his great name be blessed for ever and ever, in his wisdom and understanding created the whole of the world, created the heaven and the earth, above and below, and created in man whatever he created in his world.
C. "In the world he created forests, and in man he created forests: the hairs on his head.
D. "In the world he created wild beasts and in man he created wild beasts: lice.
E. "In the world he created channels and in man he created channels: his ears.
F. "In the world he created wind and in man he created wind: his breath.
G. "In the world he created the sun and in man he created the sun: his forehead.
H. "Stagnant waters in the world, stagnant waters in man: his nose [namely, rheum].
I. "Salt water in the world, salt water in man: his urine.
J. "Streams in the world, streams in man: man's tears.
K. "Walls in the world, walls in man: his lips.
L. "Doors in the world, doors in man, his teeth.
M. "Firmaments in the world, firmaments in man, his tongue.
N. "Fresh water in the world, fresh water in man: his spit.
O. "Stars in the world, stars in the man: his cheeks.
P. "Towers in the world, towers in man: his neck.
Q. "Masts in the world, masts in man: his arms.
R. "Pins in the world, pins in man: his fingers.
S. "A king in the world [that is, God], a king in man: his head.
T. "Grape clusters in the world, grape clusters in man: his breasts.
U. "Counselors in the world, counselors in man: his kidneys.
V. "Millstones in the world, millstones in man: his intestines [which grind up food].
W. "Mashing mills in the world, and mashing mills in man: the spleen.
X. "Pits in the world, a pit in man: the belly button.
Y. "Flowing streams in the world and a flowing stream in man: his blood.
Z. "Trees in the world and trees in man: his bones.
AA. "Hills in the world and hills in man: his buttocks.
BB. "pestle and mortar in the world and pestle and mortar in man: the joints.
CC. "Horses in the world and horses in man: the legs.
DD. "The angel of death in the world and the angel of death in man: his heels.
EE. "Mountains and valleys in the world and mountains and valleys in man: when he is standing, he is like a mountain, when he is lying down, he is like a valley.
FF. "Thus you have learned that whatever the Holy One, blessed be he, created on earth, he created also in man."

Shorn of theological and mythic language, the statement says no less than natural philosophy does in its insistence upon the teleology of nature, its hierarchical order. As philosophers follow a procedure of comparison and contrast, resting on the systematic sifting of the data of nature, so too do sages. But here, nature and Scripture (without differentiation as to source or effect of derivation from nature rather than from Scripture) yield correspondences that are deemed concrete and exact.

Intellectuals to their core, confident of the capacity to contemplate, to conceive in mind for speculative analysis a real world that corresponds to the world realized alone in mind, sages insist upon the primacy of reason. Logic ruled. It was logic that they had the capacity to discern. All things can be made to make sense. Proper analysis transforms the apparent chaos of nature's data into the compelling order of purposeful system and structure as the one God created the world: streams in the world, streams in mind, a world of complement and balance. A vast and ordered universe yields its secrets to those who discern regularity in close reading of actualities. Then, in place of mysteries come reliable knowledge, facts that yield the laws of life. When they answered the question, Whence the knowledge of the rules of the ordered society, the world of balance and proportion in all things and of equitable exchange formed by the one God?, sages took their leave of philosophers. Instead of reading nature, they read the Torah. In place of searching for

regularities of nature, they found patterns in the Torah. Instead of an abstract, natural teleology, to be defined through systematic work of hierarchical classification, comparison and contrast, they invoked the will of God. This will they showed to be dependable, regulated by rules humans can discern, wholly rational, entirely just. Then, instead of an inquiry into natural history, guided by considerations of hierarchy, order, and ultimate purpose, sages contemplated the condition of Israel, explaining how those same principles of intent and order governed, the same modes of rational explanation functioned, the same media of reasoned thought in the form of applied reason and practical logic guided thought. That is what distinguished sages from philosophers and turned them into theologians: the privileged source of truth that the Torah constituted.

Take, for example, the heart of the system of the Torah, the conviction of one God's rule of a world of order that is to be explained by appeal to the principles of justice. Then events serve as the source of moral truth. Destiny is dictated by God, and God's hegemony realizes a morality defined by justice. So justice, not chance, governs Israel, specifically, God's plan. For God has a purpose in what he does with Israel. This point is set forth by reference to exemplary actions, a narrative of what counts. God sent Israel down into Egypt to have occasion to perform miracles, so that the whole world would know that he is God and there is no other (Sifre Deut. CCCVI:XXX.2ff.):

2.A. "And how on the basis of Scripture do you say that our ancestors went down to Egypt only so that the Holy One, blessed be he, might do wonders and acts of might, and so that his great name might be sanctified in the world?
B. "As it is said, 'And it came to pass in the course of that long time that the king of Egypt died . . . and God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant' (Exod. 2:23–24).
C. "And it is said, 'For the name of the Lord I proclaim; give glory to our God.'

The purposeful character of God's actions now is spelled out in further cases:

3.A. "And how on the basis of Scripture do we know that the Omnipresent brought punishments and the ten plagues on Pharaoh and on the Egyptians only so that his great name might be sanctified in the world?
B. "For to begin with it is said, 'Who is the Lord, that I should listen to his voice?' (Exod. 5:2).
C. "But in the end: 'The Lord is righteous, and I and my people are wicked' (Exod. 9:27).

We move from the punishment of Egypt to the miracles done for Israel, also purposefully:

4.A. "And how on the basis of Scripture do we know that the Omnipresent did wonders and acts of might at the sea and at the Jordan and at the Arnon streams only so that his great name might be sanctified in the world?
B. "As it is said, 'And it came to pass, when all the kings of the Amorites that were beyond the Jordan westward, and all the kings of the Canaanites [that were by the sea, heard how the Lord has dried up the waters of the Jordan from before the children of Israel until they had passed over, their heart melted]' (Josh. 5:1).
C. "And so Rahab says to the messengers of Joshua, 'For we have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea before you' (Josh. 2:10).
D. "Scripture says, 'For the name of the Lord I proclaim; give glory to our God.'

Not only miracles, but suffering and martyrdom serve God's purpose:

5.A. "And how on the basis of Scripture do we know that Daniel went down into the lions' den only so that the Holy One, blessed be he, might have occasion to do wonders and acts of might, and so that his great name might be sanctified in the world?
B. "As it is said, 'For the name of the Lord I proclaim; give glory to our God.'
C. "And Scripture says, 'I make a decree, that in all the dominions of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel . . .' (Dan. 6:27–28).
6.A. "And how on the basis of Scripture do you maintain that Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah went into the fiery oven only so that the Holy One, blessed be he, might have occasion to do for them wonders and acts of might, and so that his great name might be sanctified in the world?

> B. "As it is said, 'It seems good to me to declare the signs and wonders that God Most High has done for me . . . how great are his signs, and how mighty are his wonders, his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom' (Dan. 3:32–33)."

Important here are two traits of mind. First, theological truth is discovered in revealed Scripture. But then, second, the facts that are adduced are ordered into generalizations that are subject to the tests of verification or falsification: philosophical modes of thought applied to the data of theology: the search for the logic of God. What philosophers of Judaism accomplished in medieval times, joining Torah to reason, sages accomplished in the very process of formulating the Torah, oral and written, for the ages.

What is at stake in monotheism as set forth by the Torah? It is an explanation of Israel's present condition, and, still more urgent, identification of the operative reasons that will lead to viable hypotheses concerning Israel's future prospects. The present properly analyzed and explained contains within itself the entire past, the whole future, all together, all at once. We turn to Abram because we wish out of the past to know the future and because we take as fact that Israel's future recapitulates the past of Abram. God has laid out matters from beginning to end; Scripture not only records the past but provides the key, through patterns we can identify in the present, to the future. The premise of analysis then is, when we understand the facts in hand, we also can learn the rules. So in a world created in accord with the requirements of exact balance, proportion, correspondence, complementarity, and commensurability. There are no mysteries, only facts not yet noticed, analyses not yet undertaken, propositions not yet proved.

How to explain the present? The sages' explanation of the justice of God identifies the rational principle that is involved. Scripture's facts do not suffice, reason is demanded. Rationality thus is established by appeal not to the given of Scripture but to the conviction that the familiar traits of perfection characterize creation and the creator. Sages do not paraphrase or recapitulate Scripture and its narrative, they transform Scripture into facts to be analyzed and reconstructed. The results yield self-evidently valid doctrines. These prove to be few but paramount: the perfection of creation, the centrality of the Torah as a source of established facts, the subservience of God—therefore creation and history—to the same reason that animates the mind of humankind. All things are subject to the rules of logic and order that the human mind obeys, and explanation in the end must derive from the sources of nature and its laws and the Torah and its regularities, each recapitulating the mind and will of the loving and merciful and reasonable God, in whose image, after whose likeness, humankind is made.

What of the future? Sages compared themselves to prophets and insisted that their knowledge of the Torah provided a key to the future. Knowing why noteworthy things take place provided them with that key. For a model of anticipation will extrapolate from the results of analysis and explanation those governing rules of an orderly world that define a useful hypothesis concerning the future. Having identified regularities and defined descriptive laws, then accounted for those rules by spelling out the systemic reasons behind them, sages had every reason to peer over the beckoning horizon. For their basic conviction affirmed the order and regularity of creation, its perfection. If, therefore, they knew the rules and how they worked (including remissions of the rules), sages insisted they could predict how the future would take shape as well.

In its statement of monotheism, therefore, the Torah tells the story of how God created the world and sustains creation through the just moral order realized in the people to whom God made himself known, holy Israel. The theology narrates the unfolding tale of humanity from the creation of the world to the resurrection of the dead to eternal life with God. It sustains complex articulation and extension without losing coherence. That story is told in several distinct forms of discourse, mythic-narrative, exegetical, analytical and argumentative, in

media of law and of lore, in statements of a general character and cases examined on their own or treated as exemplary. That sustaining story conveys a cogent logic, self-evident principles of reason and rationality. From a few governing principles or convictions, the entire story spins itself out into the finest details.

JACOB NEUSNER

Mormonism and Judaism

THE Mormons are members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, organized in New York State in 1830. They take their nickname from the Book of Mormon, translated by Joseph Smith, Jr., the founder of the Church, and edited originally, they assert, by an ancient American prophet, Mormon, who was of Hebrew descent. The Church states that it also believes the Bible "to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly." These statements come from the eighth of thirteen Articles of Faith, penned in 1841, by the Prophet Joseph, as the Church often calls him, to serve as a thumbnail sketch of their beliefs. The LDS people, as they are sometimes known, generally utilize the King James Version of the Bible, from which all quotations below are extracted. The Church is on occasion attacked by other Christian denominations as being non-Christian, although its members maintain that theirs is the Restored Church of Jesus Christ, established by Him in the "Meridian of Times" (the epoch of Jesus and the Apostles), only to be lost during the first centuries C.E., due to individual and collective apostasy. In response to the young Joseph Smith's prayers concerning which church he should join, the process of Restoration began in the spring of 1820, when he was called as a prophet, according to the pattern established in the Hebrew Bible. He was born in Vermont in 1805, though his family had moved to western New York State, the so-called "Burned-over District," because of the currents of Protestant revivalism that frequently swept across it, stirring the people into a religious fervor. From the very outset, the adherents to the Mormon Church have called themselves "Latter-day Saints," as contrasted to those of "former days," though now they prefer simply the "Church of Jesus Christ" as their appellation.

Members of the Church have frequently expressed a particular affinity with Jews and things Judaic, whether pertaining to their own era or to former times. For instance, each worthy member can receive, they believe by inspiration, a "patriarchal blessing," in which the individual's lineage is declared: that is, the Tribe of Israel from which he or she is descended or into which he or she is adopted. Incidentally, the striking usage of "saints" in the Church's name is not to indicate anyone elevated to a position of sanctity in the world to come. Rather, it accords more with the term as it occurs (at least ninety times!) throughout the Hebrew Bible, and later in the New Testament, usually denoting one who by covenant follows God and has commenced the process of sanctification, effectively an extraction of one's life from the "sins of the world." The LDS penchant for things Hebraic (at least as they perceive it) would also manifest itself in Joseph Smith's contracting of a professor of Hebrew to teach at the institution he called the "School of the Prophets," as well as in the toponymics of the State of Utah, with such features as a Jordan River, the Great Salt Lake paralleling the Dead Sea, and towns named Ephraim, Enoch, Goshen, and Moab. Indeed, the LDS believe that the settling and prosperity of that State and of the Mormon colonies throughout Western North America figure as the literal fulfillment of the prophecy that "the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose" (Is. 35:1).

The LDS migrants first came to the Valley of the Great Salt Lake in 1847, having been driven from place to place by their enemies (another affinity they feel with the Hebrew nation). They were forced to leave Illinois, where they had founded what was

then the largest city in the state, Nauvoo, a name taken from the Hebrew of the twenty-third Psalm. Their legacy of persecution certainly cannot match that endured by the Jewish people over the course of millennia. The Extermination Order, issued by Governor Boggs of Missouri in 1838, or the murderous mobs that drove the Saints from state to state and finally expelled them from the United States in 1847, by no means rival in horror with the devastation of the Holocaust of European Jewry. Nonetheless, on a per capita basis, the Mormons have undeniably suffered greatly at the hands of oppressors and feel a genuine kinship with the people they view as kindred Israel. The LDS, from the very inception of their faith, have considered themselves to be "Modern Israel," moving westward toward the Promised Land. In this context it is perhaps not altogether surprising that Brigham Young, Joseph Smith's successor and the Second President of the Church, has been labeled an "American Moses." Under extreme duress, he led his people out of bondage to their enemies, founding a new Zion in the Wilderness, what some writers have termed the "Great Basin Kingdom."

Admittedly, it is not uncommon to encounter a people that associates itself on one level or another with Israel, particularly in the Puritan New World (or even elsewhere, as among the Boers in South Africa), with accompanying images of exile from Europe/Egypt and the conquest of a new Promised Land. Such imagery often involves a figuration, whether consciously or unconsciously, of a sort of New Israel, surrogate for the Old that fell from grace and thereby lost its status with regard to the God and the Covenant. Mormons may participate to some degree in this mind-set; however, they do not generally view themselves as supplanting or even superseding Israel, but rather see their role as more of a supplement, effectively subsuming the mission of the Covenant People, though without any ouster of the original tenants, who are fellow (rather than fallen) Israelites.

LDS members believe firmly in the bond established between God and Abraham, which they consider renewed in the Church with the Restoration of the Gospel, though not revoked to the Jews. Mormons understand the Covenant between Deity and Israel's patriarch was a mutual agreement, not so much to establish a Chosen People given to any sort of chauvinism, making one group *a priori* more acceptable than another. Rather, it was to create a vehicle for blessing all the other peoples of the earth (Gen. 18:18). Mormons construe this intermediary function to be Israel's mission, anciently and in more modern times. This role has constituted the impetus for the Church to take the Gospel to the world, invoking a veritable missionary fervor to "share" their message with the rest of humankind. So, the LDS vision of Israel is inclusive, rather than exclusive, where every nation, and every individual, that does well is accepted. The Mormons do not practice circumcision but consider the mark of the covenant to be, as the Apostle Paul suggests, the "circumcision . . . of the heart" (Rom. 2:29). Some writers would also suggest that the LDS health code, called the Word of Wisdom (given to Joseph Smith by revelation in 1833), is at least analogous to the dietary laws of the Torah.

Another illuminating echo of this same Hebraist mentality, along with the yearning for Messianic succor so pervasive in Hebrew poetry of the past three thousand years, can be heard in Mormon hymns. When the LDS intone "Redeemer of Israel," they invoke the once and future Anointed One in imagery of the Pentateuch and the Prophets, of primitive New Testament Christianity, as well as of more modern millennial fervor:

> Redeemer of Israel,/ Our only delight,/ On whom for a blessing we call,/ Our shadow by day/ And our pillar by night,/ Our King, our Delivr'r, our all!/
>
> We know He is coming/ To gather His sheep/ And lead them to Zion in love,/ For why in the valley/ Of death should they weep/ Or in the lone wilderness rove?/
>
> How long we have wandered/ As strangers in sin/ And cried in the desert for thee!/ Our foes have rejoiced/ When our sorrows they've seen/ But Israel will shortly be free./
>
> As children of Zion,/ Good tidings for us./ The tokens already appear./ Fear not, and be just,/ For the kingdom is ours./ The hour of redemption is near (*Hymns* #6).

Since the Church's beginnings, the LDS have proclaimed the Book of Mormon to be a particularly "Hebrew" scripture. Numerous apologists continue to point out what they judge to be Hebraic or otherwise Semitic aspects of that tome, suggesting also that the young Joseph Smith, with, at best, rudimentary formal schooling, could never have written of his own accord in the Book of Mormon. He claimed to have been visited on numerous occasions by an angel, Moroni, the son of Mormon, as well as the last prophet and custodian of golden plates engraved with the history of various waves of ancient Hebrew migrants to the New World and their descendants. This resurrected messenger ultimately gave Joseph Smith custody of the plates, written according to the record

> . . . in the characters which are called among us the reformed Egyptian, being handed down and altered by us according to our manner of speech.
>
> And if our plates had been sufficiently large we should have written in Hebrew; but the Hebrew hath been altered by us also; and if we could have written in Hebrew, behold, ye would have had no imperfection in our record.
>
> But the Lord knoweth the things which we have written, and also that none other people knoweth our language; therefore he hath prepared means for the interpretation thereof (Mormon 9:32–34).

As printed on the title page of the Book of Mormon, it was "by the gift and power of God," using, among other instruments, the Urim and Thumim that had been prepared anciently for the purpose, that Joseph Smith translated and published the volume in 1830. Later researchers have noted that the day Joseph Smith said he received the plates, September 22, 1827, marked Rosh Hashanah, the "day God remembers his promises." This harvest festival would mark the symbolic beginning of what Mormons consider the final gathering of Israel.[1]

The Book of Mormon's stated purpose, as it reads on the Title Page, is ". . . to the convincing of the Jew and the Gentile that Jesus is the Christ, the Eternal God, manifesting himself unto all nations." So, it is a Christian document in a profoundly Jewish, or at least Hebraic, context. The narrative commences with the story of one Lehi, a "prophet" descended from the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, who was called at about the time of the reign of Zedekiah, king of Judah, in the vicinity of Jerusalem, before the Babylonian captivity (approximately 588 B.C.E.). After various dreams and visions, this messenger admonished the people to repent of their sins in order to avert the coming calamity, though they refused to heed his message. Two of his sons, Nephi and Sam, as well as their mother Sariah, believed his words, though two older siblings, Laman and Lemuel, generally rejected their father's warnings. Eventually, the family was called on to flee into the "wilderness," though Nephi and his brothers returned for the records of their people, written on the Brass Plates, in the custody of a prepotent personage in Jerusalem named Laban.

Referred to several times as "the record of the Jews," these documents, Mormons believe, contained the essence of the Hebrew Bible, from the Creation up to and including the contemporary writings of Isaiah and Jeremiah. Lehi expressed particular concern to obtain this record, and delight once it was secured. His pervasive worry was that without the written law, his people would dwindle in ignorance and unbelief, legally, linguistically, or both. From the outset of the story, Nephi would assume the bulk of the duties of scribe, authoring much of the early accounts of his family. He quotes lengthy passages from these Brass Plates, particularly from Isaiah, discoursing, among other matters, on "the restoration of the Jews, or of the House of Israel," and how, "after they were restored they should no more be confounded, neither should they be scattered again" (1 Nephi 15:20). The language of Joseph Smith's translation sounds remarkably like that of the King James Version of the Bible; apologists would explain this as a result of his having been schooled at home according to that volume, and that he thought, perhaps, that this was the appropriate (and the only) idiom of Scripture.

With Lehi and his household would go out into the desert the servant of Laban, Zoram, as well as the family of one Ishmael, a friend and associate of Lehi's, who had

several daughters who would become wives of Nephi and his siblings. They all traveled through this wilderness, which some LDS scholars suppose to be the Arabian Peninsula, eventually arriving at the sea. Though without maritime experience whatsoever, Nephi was commanded to build a ship, which he did. In that vessel he and the rest of those accompanying him would journey to the New World. The older brothers, Laman and Lemuel, as well as several of Ishmael's offspring, continually rebelled against the leadership of their younger sibling and their father, Lehi. Once they arrived on land, they divided into two basic groups, the Nephites and the Lamanites, whose political separation and ethnic integrity would essentially continue in force for centuries to come.

Mormons do not exclude the possibility of other migrations, such as that ethnologists suggest occurred across the Bering Strait, or others from Europe, Asia, or even Africa. The Book of Mormon does not pretend to be a history of the entire continents of North and South America. Rather, it offers a glimpse of God's dealings with another branch of Israel. The Book of Mormon also refers to various migrations by land to locations within the New World, as well as to "the isles of the sea" by water. Often these migrants were effectively "lost" to their "brethren" in the population centers from where they had originated. See, for instance, the story of Hagoth, "an exceedingly curious man," who built ships and moved large companies of emigrants (Alma 63:5–8). Mormons tend to believe that descendants of Father Lehi, whether of the Lamanite or Nephite branches or some mixture of the two, along with, certainly, other ethnicities, populate many of the Pacific islands, as well as the native tribes of North, Central, and South America.

Mormons assert that these migrations and populations of branches of Israel fulfill Jacob's prophecy concerning his favorite son, Joseph, whose descendants (recall that Joseph's sons born in Egypt were ancestors of Lehi and his people) would be "as a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well; whose branches run over the wall" (Gen. 49:22). The Book of Mormon speaks of other infusions from the Old World, including a group of migrants led by Mulek, the youngest son of King Zedekiah, who would merge with the Nephites. Also, the people discovered the records of a still more ancient group, the Jaredites, who had been led to migrate across the sea after dispersal at the Tower of Babel. These peoples would pass through cycles of wickedness and evangelization, of chastisement and of repentance, until a final destruction of the Nephites (as had earlier occurred with the Jaredites), who finally would not acknowledge the error of their ways and refused repentance. The annihilation of the Nephites would take place in approximately 400 C.E., in one cataclysmic conflict climaxing at the Hill Cumorah, where the Golden Plates were later hidden until their delivery to Joseph Smith. Moroni, the final author of the record that had been kept for the better part of a millennium, survived the slaughter of his people, though his father, Mormon, the commanding general of his people, did not. Mormon had also acted as editor/abridger for an extensive collection of records, kept by a diverse array of individuals from the time of Nephi, son of Lehi, until his own day.

The LDS emphatically assert that a considerable number of Biblical prophecies also announce the advent of the Book of Mormon. For instance, they see in the Book of Ezekiel confirmation of the Book of Mormon and the Bible as mutually supportive scripture:

> The word of the Lord came unto me, saying,
> Moreover, thou son of man, take thee one stick, and write upon it, For Judah, and for the children of Israel his companions; then take another stick, and write upon it, For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel his companions:
> And join them one to another into one stick; and they shall become one in thine hand (37:15–17).

LDS consider the "sticks" as scrolls, the "stick of Judah" being the Bible, and the "stick of Joseph" as being the Book of Mormon. They believe that together these books constitute a convincing witness for the Divinity of Jesus Christ and for the veracity of His message in both hemispheres. If Jews

are a "People of the Book," perhaps it could be stated that Mormons are a "People of the Books," especially in light of their acceptance of other volumes of Scripture. These include the Doctrine and Covenants, a series of revelations given to Joseph Smith and his successors, compiled in sections, and the Pearl of Great Price, translations from papyri that came into Joseph Smith's hands, as well as the account of his own history. Along with the Bible and the Book of Mormon, these constitute the LDS Standard Works, their canonized Scripture.

Various writers have performed analyses of word usage and frequency of the Book of Mormon, concluding that this tome was written by numerous authors, each with disparate vocabulary preferences and styles of composition. Critics also note the presence in the Book of Mormon of such typically Biblical forms as chiasm, the psalm, and the parable. The Book of Mormon contains, for instance, an extended parable likening Israel to an olive tree, accurately describing patterns and techniques of cultivation, grafting procedures, harvesting, and so forth (see 1 Nephi 10, 15; Jacob 5). LDS apologists argue that of his own accord, Joseph Smith, growing up in upstate New York when he did, could never have known such things to include them in the Book of Mormon. Authors have also documented numerous other "Hebraisms" in phraseology and sentence structure. In this regard, John A. Tvedtnes suggests that "[m]any expressions used in the Book of Mormon are awkward or unexpected in English, even in Joseph Smith's time. Yet they make good sense when viewed as translations, perhaps as too literal translations, from an ancient text written in a Hebrew-like language."[2] The possible presence of numerous other Hebrew/Old World themes, types, and motifs in the Book of Mormon continues to be a topic of exploration.[3]

Despite such transoceanic parallels, the writers of the Book of Mormon evidence a profound and even poignant awareness of their separation from the rest of Israel. Still, they awaited the coming of the Messiah like the rest of their brethren, wherever they might have wandered. The Book of Mormon documents the signs of Jesus' birth in Palestine (foretold by prophets of both Hemispheres, Mormons emphasize). In turn, his death was announced by terrible natural disasters that destroyed great numbers of the more rebellious and wicked people. Those "more righteous" were spared, to behold the advent of the resurrected Messiah, come to teach his flock in the New World, as he had promised in Palestine. Mormons note that during his mortal ministry, Jesus had emphasized his role-to-come in the New World, though his followers apparently misunderstood Him, since they were generally unaware of other Israelites who might fit under this heading: "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd" (John 10:16).

The Book of Mormon documents the fulfillment of this prophecy in the Americas, where the Messiah taught his people, gathering them under his evangelical aegis. Jesus formed a Church with twelve Apostles and an organization and message quite similar, LDS believe, to those established in the Holy Land during His mortal ministry and the Apostolic period thereafter. Mormons often cite widespread legends among the Native American peoples, concerning a great "Bearded White God," a prophet and a healer, who visited their ancestors and promised to return. The LDS generally interpret the traditions of such figures as Quetzelcoatl, whose stories so confused the Aztecs at the coming of the Spanish, as at least having one of their sources in distant memories the ministry of Jesus Christ in the New World.[4] The Book of Mormon documents how the Risen Lord inaugurated among the people a period of essentially perfect righteousness and peace that would last for some three generations. Though into the fourth, willful rebellion again reared its head.

Until his advent, the people had been subject to the provisions and practices of the Mosaic law. Though these requirements, Mormons believe, were done away with, fulfilled, and supplanted by the "higher law" of the Gospel, as occurred also in Palestine. The New Testament Evangelist has recorded how Jesus avowed that he was "not sent but to the lost sheep of Israel" (Matt. 15:24),

which directive is reiterated and explicated in the Book of Mormon. In his discourse to the Nephite and Lamanite remnants assembled at the temple, the resurrected Lord stated:

> This much did the Father command me, that I should tell unto them [speaking of the Palestinian branch of Israel]:
>
> That other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.
>
> And now, because of stiffneckedness and unbelief they understood not my word; therefore I was commanded to say no more of the Father concerning this thing unto them.
>
> But, verily, I say unto you that the Father hath commanded me, and I tell it unto you, that ye were separated from among them because of their iniquity; therefore it is because of their iniquity that they know not of you.
>
> And verily I say unto you, that ye are they of whom I said: Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd (3 Nephi 15:16–21).

Here, as throughout the Book of Mormon, the dichotomy between Israel and the Gentiles emerges clearly and pointedly. Moreover, the writers of ancient America considered themselves Israelites, though not necessarily Jews. On occasion, they speak almost disparagingly of the "Jews at Jerusalem," who they recall as corrupt and wicked. This sort of mind-set may also reflect Lehi's tribal affiliation and loyalties, which would have been to Joseph and his sons born in exile, rather than to Judah, one of those who had sent his younger brother into exile. Such usage may also indicate Nephi's at least partially-repressed identification with Joseph and his situation, another case of a younger, more-favored sibling persecuted by older offspring of their mutual father. Moreover, Lehi also evidences the distrust typical of one more comfortable in the desert than in the metropolis, with all its comforts and perceived corruption. He may have been a traveling merchant, frequently away from a home located in the relatively distant suburbs. His flight from the sinful city to seek purity in the wilderness constitutes a common theme in Hebrew history, from Lot's exodus from the "Cities of the Plain" to the community at Qumran. This same motif, the LDS would argue, resonates with their own history, given their flight from the persecutory and decadent cities of the Eastern United States to the safety of the Rocky Mountains. In such hymns as "High on the Mountain Top" (#5), O Ye Mountains High" (#34), and "For the Strength of the Hills" (#35) echo anti-urban sentiments, as expressed from the times of ancient Israel until now.

The LDS also frequently mention other Israelites who are neither of Judah nor of Joseph, though these peoples may or may not be remnants of those of the Northern Kingdom carried into captivity, after a disastrous defeat by the Assyrian Empire in 721 B.C.E. The Mormons do preach the eventual return of these so-called "Lost Tribes," along with the "literal gathering of Israel." These events are mentioned in the tenth Article of Faith. Incidentally, it could be suggested that the thirteen LDS Articles of Faith recall, at least numerically, if not in the author's attempt to present succinctly a broad spectrum of beliefs, the thirteen principles of Judaism written by Moses Maimonides, the greatest of the medieval Jewish philosophers. Relative to the return of the "Lost Tribes," it should also be noted that the LDS do not claim that the Nephites, Lamanites, and others of the Book of Mormon were descended from the captives transported by the Assyrians. At the time Joseph Smith translated the plates, there were certain fictions extant suggesting that the Native Americans (the Indians) were descended from these peoples. The "Manuscript Found," authored by the Rev. Solomon Spaulding, is occasionally cited in this context, though even cursory examination indicates that the Book of Mormon narrative bears it little or no resemblance.

In spite of the sometimes rather negative statements concerning "the Jews," there is also a profoundly pro-Jewish current running throughout the Book of Mormon. There exists in this volume an inescapable consciousness of the Jews, the Hebrews, of Israel, as the Covenant bearers who, however they may have strayed, nonetheless have labored to keep and preserve the records so sacred to Lehi and his descendants, as well as to

the Mormons. In this regard, for instance, Nephi, son of Lehi, would write, foreseeing, Mormons would argue, some of the sectarian furor the coming forth of the Book of Mormon instigated:

> And because my words shall hiss forth—many of the Gentiles shall say: A Bible! A Bible! We have got a Bible, and there cannot be any more Bible.
>
> But thus saith the Lord God: O fools, they shall have a Bible; and it shall proceed forth from the Jews, mine ancient covenant people. And what thank they the Jews for the Bible which they receive from them? Yea, what do the Gentiles mean? Do they remember the travails, and the labors, and the pains of the Jews, and their diligence unto me, in bringing forth salvation unto the Gentiles?
>
> O ye Gentiles, have ye remembered the Jews, mine ancient covenant people? Nay; but ye have cursed them, and have hated them, and have not sought to recover them. But behold, I will return all these things upon your own heads; for I the Lord have not forgotten my people (2 Nephi 29:3–5).

Another basic doctrine taught in the Hebrew Bible was confirmed to Joseph Smith in his First Vision in the Sacred Grove, as LDS term the experience: he and his successors would teach thereafter the concrete nature, the absolute physicality of God. Mormons unabashedly announce that the Deity has a body of flesh and bone. This means that, contrary to traditional Christian dogma, the Father and the Son are separate and distinct beings of more than just spirit. Certainly, for some versions of Judaism this sort of physicality would appear strange, even outlandish, though other interpretations, from the most ancient to the relatively modern, would find a peculiar kinship in Mormon literality. From Philo to Maimonides to Freud, what is now considered normative Judaism generally has come to espouse the idea of a strictly non-material God, a Deity without a physical body. Allusions to His corporeality in the Hebrew Bible are thus dismissed as strictly allegorical. Nonetheless, some writers would label such immateriality as an inaccurate tradition, contending that the rejection of physical images in religious practice by no means necessitates the rejection of a physical Deity. There are numerous references in the Hebrew Bible to an apparently quite corporeal God, as in the instances on Sinai where His body was seen by Moses, Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu (Num. 9). For the LDS, such passages are confirmed by "later" Scripture, such as the vision of Moses in their Pearl of Great Price, describing how that prophet "was caught up into an exceedingly high mountain,/ And he saw God face to face, and he talked with him, and the glory of God was upon Moses: therefore Moses could endure his presence" (Moses 1:1–2). In turn, Baruch Spinoza, the seventeenth-century philosopher who was excommunicated from the synagogue in Amsterdam, also would recognize this same physicality in the Jewish tradition of Deity.

Mormons would argue that their beliefs, as revealed again by God according to the pattern established even before Sinai, merely restore the true understanding of Deity that had been lost through the pervasive influence of Greek philosophy (particularly Platonism). Mormons believe that the God of the ancient Hebrews, whom they call Jehovah, was a Being of spirit who would be incarnated in the person of Jesus Christ. The LDS do not accept that Christianity began with the mortal ministry of Jesus of Nazareth. Rather, he initiated another "Dispensation" of the Gospel, as had occurred various times previous to His earthly life, always after periods of apostasy. Whereas at least since the second century C.E., the Christian Church has seen what they term the Old Testament as little more than a "prefiguration" of Christianity-to-come.

Certainly, Mormons understand the Hebrew Bible to be replete with typology, in part because the writers of the New Testament portrayed it in those terms, though also because the ancient writers so anticipated the coming Messiah. But the LDS do not functionally obviate millennia of Hebrew tradition to create their own, for they see the "new" as a continuation and fulfillment of the "old." They tend to respect the integrity of Judaism, in part, because they see it as a whole. The Mormons are not above "prooftexting" to make a point, but this is typically more for edification than argumentation. Indeed, their practice is much like that of Nephi, the son of Lehi,

who, when reading Isaiah, "did liken all scripture unto us, that it might be for our profit and learning" (1 Nephi 19:23). In other words, the directional (and instructional) arrow points backward in time, as well as forward, for, as far as Mormons are concerned, Christianity is a continuum.

Additionally, Mormons preach the literalness of the Divine Sonship of Jesus; that is, he was literally the Son, after the manner of the flesh, of God the Father, who begat Jesus' physical body with a mortal woman. In this regard, the vexed question of the "virgin birth" becomes for Mormons a relative "non-issue," in that Mary was a virgin with regard to mortal man. They accord with the Hebrew terminology of such events: the passage in Isaiah (7:14) usually rendered as "virgin," can also be translated as a "young girl" or a "maid." Though Mormons affirm that Joseph was not Jesus' father, they generally accept the likelihood of his and Mary's having had children who figured as Jesus' siblings. Mormons argue that Jesus' Davidic descent, so important to early Jewish Christians, including the Evangelist Matthew, comes matrilineally, that is, through Mary, who was also a direct descendant of the great King of Israel.[5]

God the Father's physicality is constantly reaffirmed in the LDS tradition by believers who unequivocally state that He was once also a "man" living on an earth, passing through a mortal probation. Mormons declare that "as man is, God once was" and "as God is, man may become." They teach that each human being is a son or daughter of God, in the spirit (which is also matter, however much more refined than that of fleshly bodies). It seems only logical to the LDS that offspring could follow suit to the Parent's lead. They cite passages of scripture such as John 14:9, where Jesus answers Philip, who has asked to see the Father: "he that hath seen me hath seen the Father." It is not so much that Mormons believe in an anthropomorphic God, but rather in a theomorphic humankind, a species that can "grow up" and finally mature to be like its Parent(s). Indeed, the LDS generally affirm that women, the females of this species, can become like a female Parent in heaven. Again, Mormons take scripture quite literally to the effect that "God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them" (Gen. 1:27). A favorite LDS hymn, written by Eliza Snow (1804–1887), expresses a sentiment concerning postearthly existence that for Mormons is perfectly consistent with the rest of their theology: "Truth is reason, truth eternal, tells me I've a mother there."

It is often contended that Mormons are not monotheistic, that they believe in a plurality of gods. In one sense this is certainly true: much like Moses, they accept the existence of "elim" (as in Exod. 15:11), which is sometimes translated as "heavenly beings," but other times as "gods." But LDS worship and pray to only God the Father, in the Name of Jesus Christ, who they consider to be the God of their creation, though the possibility of other Gods and creations, worlds without end, is accepted. As a close associate of Joseph Smith, W.W. Phelps (1792–1872) would write verses now sung by the LDS as a hymn: "If You Could Hie to Kolob [according to a revelation recorded in the Book of Abraham, now included in the Pearl of Great Price, this is a planet close to God's dwelling that he utilizes for celestial time-keeping]/ In the twinkling of an eye,/ And then continue onward/ With that same speed to fly,/ Do you think that you could ever,/ Though all eternity,/ Find out the generation,/ Where gods began to be?" (*Hymns* #284). For the LDS faithful, existence is an eternal continuum, though they emphasize that this is not reincarnation or anything of the sort. As Phelps propounds in this same poem: "There is no end to matter;/ There is no end to space;/ There is no end to spirit;/ There is no end to race." Mormons believe in "eternal progression," where the children of God, literally, the "race" of Deity, if they so choose and perform in mortality according to Divine dictates, may emulate their Parent(s).

Even God himself "progresses," in that he has glory added through his children's accomplishments. In an extended revelation to Moses, now recorded as an eponymous book in the Pearl of Great Price, he states: "this my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man"

(1:39). Mormons believe that these two are separate elements, that immortality, a literal resurrection from the dead, will be granted to all who have lived on earth. Whereas, "eternal life" is life with God, with Him and like Him. Mormons understand that some of the names of deity are "Eternal" and "Endless," so they stress that "eternal life" is life like God. Likewise, they suggest that "eternal punishment" or "endless punishment" are "God's punishment," so, the sufferings of those condemned will not necessarily last forever, as most of the rest of the Christian world tends to believe (see Moses 7:35; Doc. and Cov. 19:10–13). In keeping with such ideas, Mormons believe that there will be a multitude of rewards, absolutely suitable for each individual. In this context, they quote Jesus' statement that "in my Father's house are many mansions" (John 14:2). The LDS believe the Deity is omniscient and omnipotent, in a word, that He is perfect, though that perfection is by no means static. Indeed, they would construe stasis as damnation, for where there is no progress, there, of necessity, exists its opposite. As Phelps expresses in "If You Could Hie to Kolob": "The works of God continue,/ And worlds and lives abound;/ Improvement and progression/ Have one eternal round."

Mormons believe in what they term a Preexistence, where all those who would become mortal beings on earth lived as spirit children of God. The Church cites passages of Scripture from both the Testaments, including the Lord's admonition to an apparently hesitant Jeremiah: "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and ordained thee a prophet unto the nations" (1:5). This passage also illuminates somewhat the Church's belief in what they call "preordination" in the antemortal life, as opposed to "predestination," which Mormons reject. They teach that each person born into mortality chose to come here in a Grand Council in Heaven before the world was. In that gathering, two plans for creation were presented, one by Lucifer and one by the Being who would become Jesus. The second plan was accepted, and as a result, Lucifer and one third of God's spiritual offspring who followed him, elected to rebel. These spirits were cast down to become the devil and his angels, tempting mankind from the outset (see Rev. 12).

Jesus offered himself as a savior to suffer for sinful human beings, paying the price for their transgressions, from Adam down to the present, on condition of repentance and compliance with the ordinances of the Gospel and the commandments of God. The Book of Moses narrates how an angel sent from God instructs Adam, who had been commanded to offer sacrifices, though he did not fully understand why: "This thing is a similitude of the sacrifice of the Only Begotten of the Father." The first man (as Mormons believe him to be) then learned: ". . . as thou hast fallen though mayest be redeemed, and all mankind, even as many as will." In his newfound knowledge, Adam "blessed God . . . and began to prophesy concerning all the families of the earth, saying: Blessed be the name of God, for because of my transgression my eyes are opened, and in this life I shall have joy, and again in the flesh I shall see God (5:7, 9–10). This marks the LDS expression, incidentally, of the theme of "Felix Culpa," traditionally ascribed to St. Augustine. This long-awaited sacrifice was carried out in the Garden of Gethsemane and culminated on the Cross, where Jesus, a willing victim who suffered for each human being's sins and literally died, surrendering his own life voluntarily, in that his spirit separated from his physical body. The Church teaches that this Atonement makes it possible for the Father to be just and merciful at once.[6] They also read passages such as Luke 24:36–40 completely literally, in that resurrection is the final and complete union of the spirit and the body.

The Church teaches that the Jews of the last centuries B.C.E. were in a general state of apostasy, having collectively perverted the truths that had been had by their forefathers and lost the full import of Divine favor. The advent of the mortal Messiah was hailed by many Israelites, though others rejected him. Within a very few generations after Jesus' death, resurrection, and ascension into heaven, another universal

apostasy had occurred. The call and ministry of Joseph Smith began another Dispensation of the Gospel, the final one before the coming of the Lord in glory. The LDS interpret the second chapter of the Book of Daniel quite literally, accepting that their Church and the "Restored Gospel" on which it is based, is the "stone cut out without hands" that breaks apart the image the prophet and King Nebuchadnezzar both beheld in dreams or visions (v. 45). The LDS faith, in principal and in practice, is to be the harbinger, if not the actual latter-day "kingdom," Daniel foresaw as "set up" by the "God of heaven" (v. 44). In turn, the stone that rolls forth to become "a great mountain and [fill] the whole earth" (v. 35) is this same Eternal Gospel, preached in all ages of the earth's history.

The Mormons teach that the Israelite tribes who accompanied Moses out of Egypt and into the Wilderness were first offered a "higher law." When Moses descended from Sinai the first time, he realized that the people of Israel, perhaps enervated by so many generations of physical and moral servitude, were not yet ready for what had been inscribed on the tablets of stone, the Gospel had in all ages of the earth. So he smashed them, though this destruction was not an act motivated by some fit of pique, but was actually mercy at work. Moses returned with new tablets, this time bearing what Mormons consider a "lesser law" that his people could live, a "law of carnal commandments" and of performances (Doc. and Cov. 84:27). This correlates with the Apostle Paul's characterization of the "law" as a "schoolmaster" to orient the people to Christ (Galatians 3:24). The sacrifices by the shedding of blood pointed toward the great atoning sacrifice of Jesus, their God, come as a mortal man to his own people to offer them once more the same regimen that first came down from Sinai. To whit, Mormons recall that Jesus announced on numerous occasions that his purpose what not to "destroy," but to "fulfill" the Law.

But for whatever reasons, the people, at least in the person of their priestly leaders (Mormons generally accord with the anticlericalism of the New Testament writers), generally rejected this new/old order. Mormons believe that under the leadership of the Apostles and other officials, the Church initially established among the Jews of Palestine continued for a time to grow and prosper all around the Mediterranean Basin. But finally, these inspired leaders were not replaced, as, one by one, they were martyred or otherwise passed away. Both organizationally and doctrinally, the Church changed and decayed: just as Jesus and the Apostles had forecast, a great "falling away" occurred (2 Thess. 2:3). The pristine teachings of Jesus were corrupted or lost as another general apostasy took place. One of the most telling losses would be the priesthood, defined by the LDS as the authority to act for God.

In Mormon faith and practice, however, "priesthood" also carries a second meaning: the body of those holding this authority. Within this corpus there are two principal priesthoods, including several offices and callings. The Melchizedek Priesthood bears the name of the priest-king of Salem, to whom Abraham paid tithes after the Battle of the Kings. This priesthood is alluded to in the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament (see Ps. 110:4, as well as the fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters of Hebrews). The offices of the Melchizedek Priesthood are: elder, high priest, seventy (a missionary calling instituted by Jesus in the primitive church), patriarch, and apostle. The lesser Priesthood, called the Levitical or the Aaronic (named after Moses' elder brother and spokesman) involves three principal offices, each having specific responsibilities: the deacon, the teacher, and the priest. Technically, the bishop (who presides over a ward, a geographically-organized congregation of several hundred members) is an office in the Aaronic Priesthood, though in the absence of a firstborn "literal descendant of Aaron," a high priest of the Melchizedek order may be called (Doc. and Cov. 68:16). The term "bishop" is actually of Greek origin, though in LDS practice it is definitely reminiscent of the ancient Hebrew tradition. Among his responsibilities, the Mormon bishop is ordained as a "common judge in Israel," reflecting the Mosaic standard, as well as the pre-regal order among the Twelve Tribes.

The LDS consider that they are working toward the ideal God communicated to Moses for the Israelites recently escaped from Egyptian bondage: "And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation" (Exod. 19:6). Every worthy LDS male may be ordained to the priesthood, which is not hereditary (as it was at certain intervals in ancient Israel) and is strictly lay, as the Church has no paid or otherwise professional clergy. LDS belief affirms that, though the Aaronic Priesthood was generally held in ancient Israel, there were noteworthy exceptions who held the higher priesthood. These would include prophets such as Moses, Samuel, Ezekiel, Isaiah, and Jeremiah, among others. In this same vein, Mormons would consider the predominance of the priestly castes, the Levites, the Temple priesthoods, i.e., the Kohanim, and finally, even the Rabbinate, in general terms, as evidence of a greater or lesser degree of apostasy. They look toward the prophetic mode as the true ideal of Divine administration.

Also illustrative of the LDS understanding of "priesthood" is their interpretation of Gen. 6:2–4, which describes how "the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose." Of their unions were born "giants in the earth . . . mighty men which were of old, men of renown." Since ancient times, there have existed traditions of the "Nephilim," gigantic offspring of mortal women and the rebellious "Watcher Angels," sons of God who lusted after beings forbidden to them.[7] Mormons usually read these passages of scripture, not as evidence of some sort of angelic miscegenation, but rather as a record of how once-faithful bearers of the priesthood who sinned in taking wives who were not faithful in the Gospel, who did not believe as they did. Therefore, the sometime "sons of God," holding His authority, fell from their pinnacle and fell short of their possibilities. Their progeny, with women who were merely the outwardly beautiful "daughters of men," though lacking in understanding of themselves as daughters of God, were, apparently, as large in stature as their parents were reduced in spirituality.

Several wards or branches (smaller congregations) of the Church are organized into a stake, a term which has reference to Isaiah's description of Zion as a tent strengthening its "stakes." These are not to be understood as tent stakes, in the more modern sense, but rather, are more like poles that, inside the structure, would support it erect (54:2). The Church is highly theocratic and generally hierarchical, though completely centered in the local congregation, which practices the principle of "common consent," where every member may "sustain" leadership at all levels. Each member in good standing may serve in a "calling," usually for a limited period of time, whether to preside over a ward as a bishop, to preside over an auxiliary such as the Primary (for children eighteen months to twelve years) or the Relief Society (the oldest women's organization in the United States), or in a priesthood quorum, as they are called, or in an auxiliary, such as the Sunday School. Mormons believe that Jesus selected the first day of the week as the Christian Sabbath, a mark of the Restoration of the Gospel, both in the Meridian of Times and in the Latter Days, as well as of the fulfillment of the Law of Moses. At whatever level one is called to serve, Mormons take seriously Paul's admonition to the nascent Church at Corinth concerning corporeal unity and interdependence (1 Cor. 12).

Mormons believe that "a man must be called of God by prophecy" and then ordained or set apart "by the laying on of hands by those who are in authority" (see the fifth Article of Faith). They talk much about inspiration and revelation, though, typically, this does not involve such dramatic heavenly manifestations as in Joseph Smith's First Vision. Rather, it is more on the order of the communication experienced by the exiled Elijah, as recounted in 1 Kings 19. This is the answer the current president of the Church, Gordon B. Hinckley, gave to Mike Wallace, who queried what revelation was like. President Hinckley, who the LDS sustain as a "prophet, seer, and revelator," described how Elijah had taken refuge in a cave on Mount Horeb, only to be confronted by a series of awe-inspiring events, including a "a great and strong wind," an earthquake and a fire. But the

Lord was in none of these cataclysmic phenomena; rather, he came as a "still small voice," through which the prophet experiences communion with the Deity.

This is not to obviate the oracular or even the ecstatic, though they obtain only in limited instances and within certain constraints. The prophetic role, according to one's "stewardship" (a word Mormons use frequently to refer to their responsibilities in the Church), is available to any man or woman. The LDS believe emphatically that fathers and mothers in the home, bishops in their wards, as well as any other individual acting in his/her "calling," are entitled to inspiration, effectively, the spirit of prophecy. To this effect, Mormons cite Moses, when he gently reproved Joshua, who had reported that Eldad and Medad "do prophesy in the camp" and wanted his mentor to "forbid them." Moses chided him: "Enviest thou for my sake? would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his spirit upon them!" (Num. 11:28–29). The LDS also quote Peter, who, in turn, is quoting Joel, as evidence of the evangelical Restoration foretold for the "last days:"

> . . . I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams (Acts 2:17; see Joel 2:28).

But such a charismatic renewal is by no means envisioned as some sort of anarchic upsurge, for Mormons believe that God's house is "a house of order" (Doc. and Cov. 88:119). Likewise, every corporeal appendage of the Church, in accord with the Pauline analogy, ought to know and function within its appointed place. In this regard, the LDS maintain that only the President of the Church holds and is authorized to utilize all the prophetic "keys" restored to the Church. Nonetheless, each worthy person has access to and is even obligated to seek out "the spirit of revelation," which "is the spirit by which Moses brought the children of Israel through the Red Sea on dry ground" (Doc. and Cov. 8:3). Mormons believe that Joseph Smith was called of God to be an oracle and a revelator to the entire Church, as is each of his successors, to bear, metaphorically at least, the "mantle" of authority. Mormons often allude to the garment Elijah left behind with Elias, symbolically passing to him the calling of prophet (2 Kings 2:13–14). The Prophet Joseph, "like most of the Lord's anointed in ancient times, has sealed his mission and his works with his own blood" (Doc. and Cov. 135:3). At the hands of an enraged mob, Joseph Smith was martyred on June 27, 1844, in Carthage, Illinois. Still, the prophetic tradition continues. Some time before his death, the Prophet Joseph wrote: "We believe all that God has revealed, all that He does now reveal, and we believe that He will yet reveal many great and important things pertaining to the Kingdom of God" (Ninth Article of Faith).

In the LDS Church, only worthy males may hold an office in the priesthood, except in one important case: in the temple a man and a woman may be sealed for "time and all eternity." Mormons believe that husband and wife enter together into a new order of the Patriarchal Priesthood (with reference to the Patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob), which, effectively, neither spouse can hold separately. The Church preaches that men and women can be married, in effect, sealed to each other, and that children born into this union are sealed to their parents for eternity. The ideal is to weld family units into one chain back to Adam and Eve. Section 132 of the Doctrine and Covenants speaks at length of this "eternal marriage" and uniting of the generations. As does the New Testament, where, for instance, Jesus confers keys on his Apostles, teaching them that by this authority what they "bind on earth shall be bound in heaven" (see Matt. 16). Joseph Smith also taught that the Hebrew Bible made particular reference to this same uniting of families across the generations. Malachi 4:5–6, for instance, states:

> Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord:
>
> And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.

Along with the revelation on eternal marriage would come the command to live the law of plural marriage, as had the Patriarchs,

again according to Divine command. The Church would practice polygamy was until 1890, when, under threat from the United States Government, it was abrogated.

Since its inception, the LDS Church has built temples (the first was in Kirtland, Ohio, dedicated in March, 1836), somewhat on the model of the Temples of ancient Israel, wherein occur various ceremonies and ordinances, for the living, as well as for the dead. Indeed, the infant Church constructed a temple before it ever established actual meetinghouses or chapels. In the temples—the Church currently operates over one hundred around the world—worthy members receive what are called "endowments." These are ceremonies recalling those performed in Solomon's Temple in which the faithful make covenants and receive sacral knowledge having to do with progression from the Preexistence through this world and into the world to come. Once an individual has been thus "endowed," as the LDS call it, he or she may enter into "the new and everlasting covenant of marriage." If the spouses remain faithful to these promises, to each other and to God, they can be husband and wife in the hereafter, enjoying a continuation of "the lives" (recalling the Hebrew "chayim"), what they often refer to as "eternal increase" (see Doc. and Cov. 132:22, 24).

Since Adam, whether because of parental apostasy or whatever other circumstances, there have been myriads of people who have lived and died without access to the saving truths and ordinances of the Gospel. Mormons believe that God is no respecter of persons, that all will have an opportunity to share in the blessings of the restored eternal truths they preach. To this end, they seek out their "kindred dead" to perform various ordinances by proxy for them. On occasion, zeal in these "duties" has perhaps carried the LDS beyond the bounds of propriety, as in the case of the "temple work" done for some of those Jews who perished in the Holocaust. Ceremonies of washing and anointing, including baptism by immersion (see Paul's mention of this in 1 Cor. 15:29), as carried out in fonts set on the backs of twelve oxen, calling to mind the Twelve Tribes of Israel. Other ordinances, including ordination to the Melchizedek Priesthood for deceased males, the endowment, and sealing of husband, wife, and children are performed in the temples by the living for the dead. LDS believe that there is a vast work of evangelization going on in what they term the "spirit world," where reside the spirits of those who depart mortality. Mormons preach that all mankind will finally be resurrected, though each person will receive a suitable reward according to his/her merits. They believe in three basic "kingdoms of glory:" in descending order of excellence, they are the Celestial Kingdom, the Terrestrial Kingdom, and the Telestial Kingdom, each with a multitude of levels and divisions according to the denizens therein (Doc. and Cov. 76; 1 Cor. 15:40). Just as Jesus was physically resurrected, the spirit and the glorified body now inseparable by death, all human beings will also receive their resurrected body in a relative condition of glory, according to their valor in the service of God and their fellowmen.

Essentially, the Restoration of the Gospel was to be an ongoing process, involving the conferral of priesthood authority and keys from various heavenly emissaries. In fulfillment of Malachi's prophecy as cited above, while Joseph Smith and his associate, Oliver Cowdery were in the Kirtland Temple shortly after its dedication, they were visited by a series of personages from the world beyond, including Jehovah Himself. As was forecast (Mormons assert) by the prophet: "the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in" (Mal. 3:1). Joseph Smith wrote that during this same vision, Moses appeared as a glorified, resurrected being, "and committed unto us the keys of the gathering of Israel from the four parts of the earth, and the leading of the ten tribes from the land of the north." Then appeared Elias "and committed the dispensation of the gospel of Abraham, saying that in us and our seed all generations after us should be blessed." Later on this same occasion, "Elijah the prophet, who was taken to heaven without tasting death, stood before us, and said: Behold, the time

has fully come, which was spoken of by the mouth of Malachi—testifying that he [Elijah] should be sent, before the great and dreadful day of the Lord come—To turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers, lest the whole earth be smitten with a curse—" (Doc. and Cov. 110:11–15).

Pursuant to this visitation, Joseph Smith would thereafter send Orson Hyde, a convert of Jewish ancestry who had been called as one of the Twelve Apostles after the organization of the Church, to Palestine to dedicate that land for the return of the Jews. On October 24, 1841, after the typical vicissitudes of a voyager of that epoch, he ascended the Mount of Olives and offered the prayer of dedication, according to his assignment, and then returned to the United States. Mormons would say that such Zionism is quite in keeping, not only with the commission bestowed by Moses, but with their own belief that "Zion will be built upon this [the American] continent" (Tenth Article of Faith), as well as in the Land of Israel. They believe that the old Jerusalem in Palestine will be the site of numerous miraculous events, while a New Jerusalem will also be erected, though by no means to eclipse the old, in Jackson County, in the State of Missouri. This is also the location, the LDS affirm, of the Garden of Eden, as well as of a grand council celebrated by Adam and his posterity.

The attitudes of those studying Mormonism may span the gamut, from sympathy to skepticism, from perplexity to overt hostility. But at one time or another, almost all investigators express curiosity concerning the finances of the Church: how it funds its diverse endeavors, from humanitarian aid, to building construction, to education, to missionary work. The LDS are fond of quoting Malachi, stating that tithing, an honest tenth of one's income, has always been the Lord's law of finance: "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it" (3:10). Mormons maintain that this principle and its practice have been restored, like essentially all else the Church does, according to how it was done in Israel. As was the pattern then, so it is now. Members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints adamantly quote the ancient oracle Amos in support of their modern ones: "Surely the Lord God will do nothing but, he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets" (3:7).

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NOTES

[1] See Lenet Hadley Read, "The Golden Plates and the Feast of Trumpets," in *Ensign* 30 (Jan. 2000), pp. 25–29.

[2] See "The Hebrew Background of the Book of Mormon," in John A. Sorensen and Melvin J. Thorne, eds., *Rediscovering the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City, 1991), pp. 77–91.

[3] See on this Hugh Nibley, *Since Cumorah* (Salt Lake City, 1970), and *An Approach to the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City, 1978); Daniel C. Peterson, in *Ensign* 30 (Jan. 2000), pp. 18–24; John C. Welch, ed., *Reexploring the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City, 1992).

[4] See L. Taylor Hanson, *He Walked the Americas* (Amherst, 1963).

[5] See James E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ* (Salt Lake City, 1915).

[6] See Alma 42 in the Book of Mormon for a delineation of this doctrine.

[7] See Neil Forsyth, *The Old Enemy* (Princeton, 1987).

Morocco, Practice of Judaism in

The settlement of Jews in Morocco dates back to Greco-Roman and even Phoenician times. The Jewish presence during the Greco-Roman period (beginning in 150 B.C.E.) is attested by archaeological remains, Jewish tombstones with both Hebrew and Latin inscriptions, and slabs from ancient synagogues. There are various interesting theories as to the origins of this community, some of a purely legendary nature, others more historical.

However, it is with the beginning of the Islamic period that Moroccan Jewry achieves cultural prominence. Soon after the establishment of Fez in the ninth century, that city became a great center of Jewish learning, attracting to its yeshivot students from Qayrawan, Baghdad, Andalusia, and other parts of the Jewish world. But Fez was not the only center of Jewish life and learning; there were others equally as important Dar'a, Sijilmasa and Marrakesh in the south, and, later on, Sale, Sefrou, Meknes, and Tetouan in central and northern Morocco. Great yeshivot and centers of kabbalah were to flourish in all these cities.

Responsa from the Babylonian yeshivot to the Jewish communities of Fez and Sijilmasa, address them with the utmost reverence. Indeed, during the early medieval period, Moroccan Jewry served as a cultural bridge between the great Babylonian centers of Jewish learning and the newly emerging Jewish community in Spain. They were in a very good position to do so. Not only were their rabbis scholars in their own right, but they were also in constant contact with both communities and commanded the respect of both. Morocco even provided the young Jewish community in Spain with its first teachers in Hebrew poetry, philology, and Rabbinic learning. From Morocco in the tenth century came the first Hebrew grammarians, linguists, and poets (Judah ibn Hayyuj and Dunash ibn Labrat among others), and the first great talmudist and halakhist, Isaac Al-Fasi, known also as the *Rab Alfes* or the *Rif*. Ibn Hayyuj's philological discoveries revolutionized the scientific study of Hebrew grammar and lexicography; Ibn Labrat was the first to adapt features and conventions of Arabic prosody to Hebrew, thereby providing future Hebrew poets in Spain with an important tool and models for their poetry; while Al-Fasi established the first yeshivah in Lucena. These three individuals are rightly regarded as the founders of the Spanish school of Jewish learning and science that was to culminate in the Golden Age of Jewish culture and creativity in Spain. Throughout the Golden Age in Spain, Moroccan Jews continued to maintain close cultural and intellectual ties with Spanish Jewry.

Beginning with the middle of the twelfth century, however, a curtain of darkness descended on all the Jews of North Africa, especially on those of Morocco. The Almohad persecutions that lasted from 1148 to 1276 decimated most Jewish communities in North Africa. These persecutions, which swept like wildfire across Andalusia and North Africa, left the Moroccan Jewish community spiritually and numerically exhausted. But following the expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492, the community in Morocco was infused with new blood. Jewish exiles from Spain, known as *megorashim*, brought with them their rich cultural and spiritual heritage, thereby quickening and reinvigorating Moroccan Jewish life and culture. Immediately after their arrival, these exiles began enacting ordinances, known as *Tekkanot Hakhme Castilya*, to ensure that their communal and religious life in Morocco would continue to be conducted as it had been in Spain. One example of the early *takkanot* is the one requiring a husband to include in the marriage contract (*ketubbah*) a clause barring him from marrying a second wife without the explicit and voluntary permission of the first wife. This ordinance virtually eliminated the practice of bigamy. It achieved for the Sephardim essentially the same result that Rabbenu Gershom's *herem* (ban) on bigamy (which is not binding on Sephardim) had for the Ashkenazim.

Initially, the *megorashim* met with some resistance on the part of the indigenous community, known as the *toshavim*, especially in matters of rituals and some religious practices, but eventually the *megorashim* and their customs and practices (*minhagim*) prevailed throughout Morocco. Moroccan rabbis continued to enact *takkanot* as needed through the centuries, down to the 1950s. These ordinances helped to protect the rights of women and children and promote the stability of the Jewish family as well as respond to contemporary economic and social needs.

The Sephardic Legacy Among Moroccan Jews

When the Spanish exiles arrived in Morocco in 1492, they found themselves among people whose culture they considered to be inferior to the one they had left in Spain. For Arab culture in Morocco, as elsewhere in the Arab world, was then in decline. Finding no new or fresh intellectual challenges, the exiles bent their intellectual energies and talents to conserving and preserving the cultural legacy they brought with them from Spain. They not only preserved and cultivated this heritage zealously but also did their utmost to amplify it. They continued to develop their own Jewish culture very much in the spirit and within the literary framework and context of the Sephardic tradition.

The attachment of Moroccan Jews to the Sephardic legacy found expression in many ways and on many levels. These include the liberal sprinkling of Spanish words and phrases in their Judeo-Arabic dialect, their personal and family names, their liturgy for the High Holidays and other special religious occasions, their love of Andalusian music, and their many customs and rituals. Above all, this legacy is manifested in Moroccan scholarship and creativity in the fields of halakhic literature, religious poetry in Hebrew and Arabic, critical biblical exegesis, kabbalah, philology, and even historiography. Indeed, the output of Moroccan Jewry in these fields is most impressive. Every city and every period produced its rabbis, poets, and Jewish scholars of great renown. These rabbis and poets wrote a voluminous quantity of works in all branches of Jewish and Rabbinic literature. Because of the high scholarly quality of these works and the general Jewish interest of their contents, these works were to gain widespread acceptance throughout the Jewish world. Such were, for example, the biblical commentary of Hayim ben ʿAttar, known especially among the Hasidim as the saintly *Or ha-Hayim* or *Or haHayim ha-Kadosh* (Leghorn, 1739); the responsa of Jacob Aben-Tzur (Alexandria, 1894), Reph'ael Berdugo (Krakow, 1891), Isaac Bengwalid (Leghorn, 1855), and Repha'el ben Simeon (Alexandria, 1912); the *piyyutim* (religious poems) of David ben Hassin (Amsterdam, 1807/ Casablanca, 1931/Israel, 1973, 1999), Jacob Aben-Tzur (Alexandria, 1898), Repha'el Moshe Elbaz (Jerusalem, 1935), and Jacob Berdugo (London, 1855); the numerous historical works on Moroccan Jewry by Abner Tzarfati (Jerusalem, 1979), Jacob Moshe Toledano (Jerusalem, 1911, 1975), Joseph ben Naim (Jerusalem, 1930), and Joseph Messas (Jerusalem, 1969–1975); and finally the philosophical and theological works of Judah ben Nissim ibn Malka (Paris, 1954), and A. Eliyahu Benamozeg (Jerusalem, 1967). These are only some of the better known ones; there are many more.

It should be emphasized in this connection that Moroccan Rabbinic creativity was unique and came closest to the ideal established by the Spanish masters of the Golden Age in that this creativity was multidimensional. Moroccan rabbis wrote works on biblical and talmudic exegesis, halakhah, poetry, history, and theology.

This multidimensional aspect of Moroccan Rabbinic creativity is perhaps best illustrated by Moroccan *piyyutim*. Of all the manifestation of the Sephardic legacy noted above, it was in poetry that the two functions of preservation and creative amplification are most apparent. Of all the major literary genres, none was more jealously preserved and zealously cultivated than was poetry. Moroccan poets preserved and enriched the poetic legacy of Andalusian Jewry. They faithfully guarded both the form and the

substance of the *piyyut* in terms of the traditional themes and techniques of composition.

Most Moroccan rabbis considered the composition of *piyyutim* and *melitzah* (rhymed prose) to be a desirable achievement of a *talmid hakham* (Rabbinic scholar). Thus, almost all great (and not so great) rabbis in Morocco composed *piyyutim* for various occasions, some more than others, but all did. It is no accident that all the great religious poets in Morocco, in most cases, were also the pillars of Rabbinic scholarship and the halakhic authorities of their time. For example, Jacob Aben-Tzur (1673–1753), one of the greatest halakhic authorities of his time, was equally famous for his *Mishpat u-Tzedakah be-Ya'akov*, a two volume collection of responsa and *takkanot* and his *'Et le-Khol Hefetz*, a collection of his *piyyutim* and *kinot* (lamentations). The same was true of all Moroccan religious poets; they were all renowned Rabbinic scholars.

By far the most illustrious of Moroccan poets was David ben Hassin who died in Meknes in 1792. His collection of *piyyutim* and *kinot*, entitled *Tehilah le-David* was first published in Amsterdam in 1807 shortly after his death; it was republished in Casablanca, Morocco, in 1931, and again in Israel in 1873. Most recently, Ephrayim Hazan of Bar Ilan University published a scholarly and annotated edition of this work (Lod, Israel, 1999).

The Moroccan *piyyut* was strongly religious; it was inspired by ardent faith, permeated with devotion, and distinguished by a deep attachment to the values of Judaism and a great love for the land of Israel. Noteworthy also is its popular character. Moroccan rabbis and laymen composed *piyyutim* for every occasion in a very lucid and simple Hebrew and in the local Arabic dialect. Moreover, these *piyyutim* were sung both in the synagogue and in the homes on holidays and at family celebrations to classical and contemporary Andalusian and Arabic music, a fact that made them and their melodies very popular. All this means that these *piyyutim* were not intended exclusively for the intellectual and scholarly elite; they were sung and enjoyed by everyone on all possible occasions. It is this popular aspect more than the literary one that accounts for their centrality in Moroccan Jewish life. There was no festive occasion, whether in the synagogue or in the home, that was not marked by the singing of appropriate *piyyutim*.

Religious, Judicial, Cultural and Educational Institutions

One of the most fundamental facts to be noted about Moroccan Jewry is that it was not fragmented into various denominations as was the case with European Jewry and is still the case in the United States. Some Jews were more observant than others; but they were all united under the leadership of their rabbis, *dayyanim*, and communal leaders. In keeping with the spirit of this communal and spiritual unity, Moroccan Jews created within the walls of the *mellah* (Jewish quarter) an entire infrastructure of communal, judicial, educational, religious, and social institutions. These include:

1) A fully autonomous Rabbinic judicial system with its local and national courts, scribes, and archives or *pinkasim*.
2) A whole galaxy of social and philanthropic organizations among which *bikkur holim, moshav zekenim, ezrat dalim, hakhnasat 'orhim, hakhnasat kallot, hevra kadisha*, etc., all designed to come to the assistance of the poor, the elderly, the widows and the orphans.
3) A full communal taxation system levied on all kosher products the revenues from which were earmarked for helping the needy and defraying other communal expenses.
4) A complete religious educational system starting with elementary education in the *Talmud Torah* or the *Em ha-Banim* and culminating in the great yeshivot where Moroccan rabbis, teachers, *dayyanim* (Rabbinic judges), *shohatim* (ritual slaughterers), *shelihe tzibbur* (cantors), and other religious functionaries were trained.
5) In the same *mellahs*, Moroccan Jews developed their own Jewish cuisine, their own Jewish music, and their own Jewish art. This was magnificently demonstrated by the exhibit, on "Moroccan Jewish Life" mounted at the Jerusalem Museum in the summer of 1973.

Some of these institutions warrant further discussions.

The Rabbinic Judicial System

As in other Muslim lands, Jews in Morocco enjoyed absolute judicial autonomy. As a result, the Rabbinic courts were recognized by the civil authorities, and their decisions were enforceable by these authorities. Every city had a *bet din* of three judges. In addition, there was a high court of appeals (*Bet din le-'ir'urim*) in Rabat.

The *dayyanim* (judges) were the most respected members of the community. The position of *dayyan* was a very prestigious and a lucrative one as well. It was the only paid Rabbinic position. Beginning in 1925 when the French authorities introduced administrative reforms in the Rabbinic court system, *dayyanim* were paid by the civil government on par with other civil judges. This arrangement remained in force after Morocco gained its independence in 1956. However, since there were to be only three judges in any city, the competition for such positions was understandably fierce.

Attached to every *bet din* were official scribes (*sofere bet din* who were in charge of drafting all legal documents such as contracts, wills, marriage contract (*ketubbot*), and the like. They retained copies of every legal instrument that they issued in their *pinkasim* (registers or records). Every *bet din* also had an official translator (*greffier*) whose function was to translate into French (and later into Arabic) every one of the court's decisions. Each *bet din* kept full records of all its decisions. These *pinkasim* and court records constitute an invaluable source for the study of the legal, economic, and social history of Moroccan Jewry.

Rabbinic courts in Morocco adjudicated in all matters of Jewish law including matrimonial, civil, and commercial transactions. This resulted in a most productive period in halakhic literature. Speaking of Moroccan *dayyanim* and their work, Menahem Elon, the pre-eminent historian of Jewish jurisprudence, observed that "theirs was a unique case of 450 years of continued jurisprudence covering all aspects of Jewish law including family, civil, and commercial law." In short, they dealt with all parts of the *Shulhan Arukh*. In the process, they produced a most impressive corpus of halakhic works, including responsa, takkanot, and legal commentaries.

In their halakhic decisions, Moroccan rabbis and *dayyanim*, like other Sephardic *poskim*, tended to be lenient, flexible, and sensitive to the needs of the times. Commenting on this aspect of Moroccan halakhah, Elon observed further, "Moroccan decisors show great sensitivity to changing circumstances and the new exigencies of modern times; they show a readiness to deal with the issues head-on; and when the situation demands bold initiatives, they do not hesitate to enact *takkanot*."

Synagogues and the Rabbinate

With but a few exceptions, most synagogues in Morocco were small, private, family synagogues, usually attached to the owner's home. They were usually built by rabbis as a source of income, or by wealthy individuals in memory of a loved one. The exceptions were the magnificent *Nahor* and *Suiri* synagogues in Tangier and the *Sadoun* synagogue in Fez.

There was no paid position of synagogue rabbi. If the owner were not himself a rabbi, he would invite a rabbi (usually a prominent one) to be an honorary member of the synagogue. Some synagogues simply did not have a rabbi at all. The most important position in the synagogue, and the only paid one, was that of the *shaliah tzibbur* or *Hazan* (cantor); at times however, even this position was voluntary. Other important positions in the synagogue were the *shammash* (sexton) and the *paytan*. The *shammash* saw to the physical maintenance of the synagogue, collected synagogue membership dues and offerings, and awakened congregants in time for prayer. The *paytan* was a master of the entire repertoire of Moroccan *piyyutim* and of the traditional Moroccan-Andalusian music. He led the congregation in the singing of appropriate *piyyutim* on all festive occasions. Neither the *shammash* nor

the *paytan* drew a salary; both depended on the congregants' generosity. A person who was called to the Torah on a festive occasion would usually make offerings to the rabbi, the *shammash* and *paytan*, to one or more charitable organizations, and for the maintenance of the synagogue.

The financial needs of most synagogues in Morocco were rather modest. Essentially, they consisted of the expenses for the maintenance of the synagogue and some income for the rabbi, if he was the owner of the synagogue and in need of such income. This relatively modest budget was met by minimal biannual membership fees supplemented by offerings made by congregants upon their being called to the Torah.

Synagogues in Morocco were not the center of Jewish life (as is the case in the United States). People went to the synagogue for prayers and some learning. There were no communal meals, no *kiddushim*, no food or drinks at any time. Therefore, synagogues in Morocco did not have kitchens, social halls, or even a *sukkah* on the festival of Tabernacles. Naturally, since synagogues were small and therefore intimate, members felt as one family. Following services, people usually visited with each other, and on occasion invited each other for lavish buffets in their homes. Generally speaking, Jewish life was lived in the home and in the streets of the *mellah*.

On regular Shabbats, services were usually brief. There was no repetition of the *musaf amidah*; there were no elaborate cantorial renditions of any prayer, no sermons, and no announcements. Services would begin at 7:30 A.M. and conclude at 10 A.M. or shortly thereafter. Rabbis usually held a *derasha* (discourse or homily) before the *minhah* service for those who cared to attend. During the week, most synagogues held services only in the morning, but not in the afternoon or evening; other synagogues met that need. For example, in Meknes a synagogue in the old *mellah* (known as R. Shema'ya's synagogue) held continuous *minhah* and *'arvit* services through the afternoon and the evening, thus accommodating the different schedules of all members of the community.

Jewish Education

Jewish education in Morocco was gradual and progressive and was provided by three distinct educational institutions: the *Talmud Torah*, the yeshivah, and various study groups known as *hevrot*. Until the beginning of the twentieth century, elementary education was provided by an independent *heder* system in which individual rabbis taught children in private synagogues without any central supervision or common curriculum. Beginning with the 1910s and 1920s, this chaotic system was replaced by a relatively modern centralized *Talmud Torah* or *Em ha-Banim* controlled and financed by the Jewish community. It should be pointed out at the outset that, traditionally, Jewish girls did not attend the *Talmud Torah*; however, they received their elementary education, both secular and religious, in the schools of the *Alliance Israelite Universelle*, which were established all over Morocco in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Jewish boys received the first stage of their education in the *Talmud Torah* where, in addition to the basic skills of reading and writing, they learned the *parashah* and *haftarah* of the week, as well as certain books of the Bible, such as the Five Scrolls, Proverbs, Psalms, and Job. The Five Scrolls were usually studied before the appropriate holiday on which they were read in the synagogue. The Books of Proverbs, Psalms, and Job were studied throughout the summer months, especially between Passover and *Tish'ah be-Av*. The studies at this elementary stage involved translating the biblical text into spoken Arabic and learning the respective traditional Moroccan melodies for these texts. Following the establishment of the State of Israel, modern Hebrew replaced Arabic as the language of instruction, and the learning of modern Hebrew became an important part of the curriculum.

By the time a student arrived at the yeshivah, he had already been initiated in the study of the Mishnah, Gemara, and *Dinim* (practical laws) for the holidays, Shabbat, prayers, and other daily matters. This was usually achieved through private instruction or in the *Talmud Torah*, where students in

the higher grades studied selected easy talmudic passages, *Pirke Avot* (*The Sayings of the Fathers*), as well as the Pentateuch with the commentary of Rashi.

Initiation in the study of the Mishnah and Talmud thus took place even before one entered the yeshivah. In fact, not everyone went to yeshivah; many Jews never did. Whatever Rabbinic learning they had was acquired in evening classes, in Saturday afternoon *derashot* or homilies, or in various study groups known as *hevrot*. These *hevrot* gathered regularly every Saturday night in private homes to hear and learn aggadah, laws, or *musar* (ethical teachings) from well-known teachers.

The yeshivah training *per se*, however, was reserved for those wishing to prepare themselves for careers as rabbis, *dayyanim*, or Rabbinic scholars (*talmide hakhamim*), and those who simply loved the study of Torah. Generally speaking, the yeshivot in Morocco were less institutionalized in their organization than their East European counterparts. Nor did they attract students from other countries, as did the celebrated Babylonian and Spanish yeshivot in medieval times. They were essentially local phenomena. They evolved around individual masters who were recognized as inspired teachers, religious and spiritual models, and men of renowned scholarly reputation. The individual masters who headed these yeshivot were either appointed by the local community, chosen by one or more benefactors who founded the yeshivah specifically for them, or were simply sought out by students who were attracted to them because of their personal, religious, and scholarly qualities. Interestingly enough, most of these yeshivot did not even have names. They were known simply by the masters who headed them and by the illustrious students they produced. But there were exceptions, and some were known by specific names.

The number of students at these yeshivot was rather small, not exceeding twenty or thirty who sat around their teacher. This resulted in an atmosphere of informality and in an intense relationship between the teacher and disciples. On the other hand, there was more than one yeshivah and more than one renowned teacher at any of the Torah centers of Morocco at any given period. The students were mostly local, for, as a general rule, every major city produced its own rabbis and judges who had been trained in its own yeshivot. Certain cities such as Meknes and Marrakesh, however, acquired a widespread reputation as great centers of Rabbinic learning and attracted students from all over the country.

The expenses required for maintaining these yeshivot were minimal. There was no physical plant to speak of, as instruction took place in one of the local synagogues (often the teacher's own) at no special cost. There were no dormitories, no large faculty, and above all no administrative overhead. Students paid no tuition. The main expenses involved a modest salary for the teacher and some minimal aid to needy students, especially those coming from elsewhere.

The study of the Talmud in Moroccan yeshivot, as in most Sephardic ones, was halakhically oriented. It was studied with the ultimate aim of arriving at halakhic decisions (*le-ʿasoke shema'teta ʿalibba de-hilkheta*), and not merely as a intellectual exercise. This halakhic orientation was reflected in the program of studies that was always divided equally between Talmud and halakhah. The particular tractate studied at any given period was frequently chosen for the purpose of providing the talmudic background for whatever laws were being studied at the time. The study of halakhah involved a review of all Rabbinic literature relating to any given issue in Jewish law. This was achieved through the systematic study of the *Tur*, the *Bet Yoseph* and the *Shulhan Arukh* with its commentaries.

In addition to the study of Talmud and halakhah, the Rabbinic curriculum in Moroccan yeshivot included biblical exegesis and some aspect of Jewish thought. For the study of the Bible, the favored commentaries were Rashi, Radak (David Kimhi), and Abraham ibn Ezra. For Jewish thought, the medieval philosophical and theological treatises *Hovat ha-Levavot* (*The Duties of The Heart*) of Bahya ibn Pakuda, the *Kuzari* of Judah Halevi, and the *Shemonah Perakim le-Harambam*

(Maimonides' *Eight Chapters*) were among the most popular texts.

All these subjects were studied in an informal setting. One did not have to register for specific courses. Advanced students sat together with novices, and each learned from the wisdom or mistakes of the other. There were no special examinations at the end of a year or semester, no accumulation of credits, and no special degree awarded. Ordination, or *semikhar rabbanut* was usually conferred in an assembly of rabbis and notables by the ordaining rabbi placing his hands on the head of the candidate and blessing him.

Customs, Rituals, and Religious Practices

Essentially, the *minhagim* (customs) of Moroccan Jews are similar to those of all Sephardim, for all Sephardim cherish a common cultural and religious heritage that goes back to the Golden Age in Spain. This is certainly true in matters of halakhah and liturgy. Thus, for example, all Sephardim regard Caro's *Shulhan Arukh* as the supreme halakhic authority, rulings of which are binding on all of them. Nonetheless, Sephardim from various parts of the world differ from each other in the precise way in which they express and practice this tradition. This is especially true with respect to food, music, and folklore, which inevitably reflect local influences. The colorful local customs lend to certain holidays and festive occasions an element of charm and local fragrance that give these celebrations their unique character. Such are, for example, the celebrations of *Mimouna* and *Hillula* as well as the institution of *Bakkashot* (discussed below), all of which are quintessentially Moroccan.

It is to be noted, however, that in Morocco as in other Sephardic communities (especially those in Islamic lands), all of life was essentially lived within a religious framework. Even folklore revolved around religious institutions. The following description of the Moroccan practice will focus on both uniquely Moroccan customs as well as those shared with other Sephardim.

Daily and Shabbat Services

Before the evening service of *'arvit*, Moroccan Jews recite *Le-David hashem 'ori ve-yish'i . . .* (Ps. 27) and other verses from the Psalms. Before *Rosh Hodesh*, they recite *Barekhi nafshi . . .* (Ps. 104) as well, and during the holiday of Hanukkah, they recite *Mizmor shir hanukat . . .* (Ps. 30). In some communities (such as in Meknes), the repetition of the Amidah by the cantor in the weekly *shaharit* and *minhah* services as well as the *musaf* and *minhah* of the Sabbath was not only discouraged but virtually eliminated. This was done in accordance with the strong recommendations of prominent Moroccan halakhic authorities.

On weekdays, a number of individuals would remain in the synagogue following the *shaharit* service to read the *Hok le-Yisra'el*. This is a fixed daily program of study consisting of readings from the *parashah* and the *haftarah* of the week as well as from the biblical Writings, the Mishnah, Gemara, *Zohar*, and other legal and ethical works. This is a well-established tradition among most Sephardim. It is based no doubt on Caro's recommendation in the *Shulhan Arukh* that, "After one leaves the synagogue, he should go to the house of study and set a fixed time for Torah study; a time that must never be skipped even if it means foregoing financial gain" (*Orah Hayim*, section 155:1).

Likewise, following the Saturday morning service, a number of individuals would remain in the synagogue in order to read together the *parashah* of the week "*shenayim mikra ve-'ehad targum*." This involves the reading of every verse twice in Hebrew and once in Aramaic. Again, this is a tradition shared by most Sephardim. The origin of this practice goes back to the Talmud. B. Ber. 8a states: "Rav Huna says in the name of R. Ammi: A man should always complete his *parashah* together with the congregation, [reading] twice the Hebrew text and once the Aramaic *targum*, and even [verses that contain only names such as the verse] Atarot and Dibon . . ." Moroccan Jews continued to follow this tradition tenaciously even after their massive emigration to Israel.

On Friday evening, before the *Kabbalat*

Shabbat service, like most Sephardim, Moroccans read (or rather chant) The Song of Songs. No doubt, this practice has kabbalistic origins.

Bakkashot

One of the most popular Moroccan cultural institutions is the *Bakkashot*. It may be described in popular terms as a concert or "sing-in" that took place around 3 A.M. every Friday night between Tabernacles and Passover, a season of long winter nights. This service was held by a number of *hevrot* or groups bearing the names of one of the biblical prophets, such as *hevrat Yehizkel Ha-Navi, hevrat Eliyahu ha-Navi*, etc. The *bakkashot* gatherings provided lovers of music and *piyyutim* an opportunity to get together and entertain themselves by singing *piyyutim*. This is reminiscent of the poetic tradition in medieval Spain, when Arab and Hebrew poets would entertain themselves by reciting and discussing poetry at nocturnal wine parties, testing each other's poetic mettle. Other members of the community, including rabbis and *dayyanim*, attended these gatherings as well and enjoyed the experience as much.

The *bakkashot* service would begin with the singing of the Song of Songs followed by *Tikkun Hatzot* (special midnight liturgy that included the chanting of many psalms, especially Ps. 51, the Psalm of Repentance). Following these preliminaries, the *Paytan*—and every such group had its own *paytan*—introduced the musical theme of the night. He led the participants in singing the appropriate *piyyutim*, selected for their thematic connection to the weekly portion of the Torah and for their melodic adaptability to the particular mode of Andalusian music chosen for the night. All participants, especially those with pleasant voices and a rudimentary knowledge of *piyyutim*, took turns, each singing a stanza. Towards morning, young boys joined in the singing of popular *piyyutim* and even modern Israeli songs. Throughout the service, participants were served refreshments. In short, this was a very festive religio-social gathering enjoyed by all, and reflecting Moroccan Jews' love for Andalusian music and *piyyutim*. Religiously speaking, it was perhaps inspired by the words of the Psalmist: "I arise at midnight to praise You for Your just rules" (Ps. 119:62).

The institution of *bakkashot* encouraged the composition of *piyyutim*, the training of *paytanim*, and the publication of anthologies of *piyyutim*. While every city had its *hevrot* of *bakkashot*, the city of Mogador was particularly renowned for its many expert *paytanim* and for its own anthology of *piyyutim*, entitled *Shir Yedidot*. Towering head and shoulder over all Moroccan *paytanim*, was Rabbi David Bouzaglo of Mogador, a Rabbinic scholar, a superb Hebraist and grammarian, a prolific poet, and above all *ne'im zemirot yisra'el*, 'the sweet singer of Moroccan Jewry, whose many disciples are still active as *hazanim* and *paytanim* in Israel, France, Canada, and other diasporic Moroccan Jewish communities.

Passover, Lag ba-Omer, and Shavuot

The *Shulhan Arukh* introduces the laws of Passover with the statement, "We begin to inquire about the laws of Passover thirty days before Passover" (*Orah Hayim*, section 429:1). In Morocco, preparations for Passover began immediately after Purim. With the exception of matzot and kosher wine, all other foods including sweet preserves, condiments, and spices were prepared at home. Because all food for Passover had to be prepared in a kosher for Passover environment, cleaning for the holiday had to start fairly early in the process. The Community Council (*va'ad ha-kehilah*) had control over the distribution of matzot and kosher wine. Both of these items were taxed by the Council, and the proceeds of these taxes were earmarked for Passover provisions for all the needy in the community.

In matters pertaining to Jewish law and liturgy, Moroccan Jews follow common Sephardic practices. Like other Sephardim, they eat legumes (*kitniyot*) and rice on Passover. They also eat *matzah 'ashirah* ("rich matzah"), made with freshly squeezed orange

juice, home made sweet wine (undiluted with water), eggs, and flour prepared specially for Passover. This is in accordance with Caro's rulings that permit both practices. Also, like other Sephardim, they begin the evening services of every holiday, major or minor, with the reading of a psalm thematically relevant to the day. In the case of Passover, it is *Hodu lashem ki tov . . . Yomeru ge'ule hashem . . .* (Ps. 107), the central theme of which is redemption.

Yet, apart from these and other halakhic and liturgical matters, Moroccan Jews, unlike other Sephardim, have a tradition rich in unusual and unique customs for Passover, some of which are still practiced by Moroccan Jews around the world. Following are some illustrative examples.

On the Shabbat before Passover, Moroccan Jews sing the *piyyut "Be-hag zeh ne'esah mofet va-nes,"* a rhymed didactic poem enumerating all the laws of *bedikat hametz* (the search for leavened bread). On the day before Passover, leftover *hametz* was burned in the street in small earthenware stoves, as children jumped around singing (in Arabic) *hametz ʿashir u-baba ʿashir, hametza ʿashira wima ʿashira* ("may Daddy and Mommy be rich"). *Lulavim* that had been kept from the last holiday of Sukkot for this occasion were burnt with the *hametz*.

The Sephardic recipe for the *haroset* is rich and spicy. Its ingredients include nuts, figs, dates, raisins, pomegranates, and many spices (cinnamon, ginger, and cloves). Some of the items on the Seder plate are also different from the ones used by Ashkenazim. For *karpas*, Moroccan Jews use celery, which in Arabic is called *krafs* corresponding to the Hebrew *karpas*. The outer leaves of romaine lettuce, which in Morocco are somewhat bitter, are used for bitter herbs (*maror*), while its inner leaves are used for *hazeret*.

Upon breaking the middle matzah (*yahatz*), the head of the family recites in Arabic, "Thus has God split the sea in twelve paths when our ancestors left Egypt led by our master Moshe ben Amram." The *afikoman* is not hidden but hung around the neck in a dramatization of the biblical verse, "their kneading bowls wrapped in their cloaks upon their shoulder" (Exod. 12:35). In some parts of Morocco, the scene was more dramatic. The men would tie a bundle containing the *afikoman* to a stick and hurry out of the house singing "in haste did we depart from Egypt, their kneading bowls wrapped in their cloaks upon their shoulder." In Meknes the *afikoman* was tied around the neck of the youngest child. The Seder plate is then lifted by the head of the family and passed over the head of everyone at the table while everyone sings "In haste (*bi-vhilu*) did we depart from Egypt; yesterday we were slaves and today we are free men; may we be next year in Jerusalem."

The *bi-vhilu* ceremony is followed by the chanting of the Haggadah as each member of the family takes his or her turn in chanting one paragraph in Hebrew and then translating it into Arabic. The entire Haggadah including the lively song *dayyenu* is translated into Arabic for the benefit of women and children. In general, Moroccan Jews are fond of Arabic translations. They also translate into Arabic the Book of Ruth on Shavuot, the hymn *Ein ke-Lohenu* as well as many *kinot* for *Tish'ah be-Av*. Surprisingly, in Morocco as well as in many other Sephardic communities, the *Mah nishtanah* (the "Four Questions") is chanted in unison by all or by any member of the family, not necessarily by the youngest child. Children take their turn with the rest of the family. Hence no special preparation is required on the part of anyone.

Dramatization is the order of the night. An interesting custom associated with the Seder is to set a small table with all sorts of greens and flowers as well as fruits and vegetables. This table is then covered or hidden under the dinner table. Just before reading the paragraph "'And numerous,' as it is said: 'I have caused thee to multiply like the growth of the field,'" it is brought out and uncovered as a visual demonstration of what is being read.

Some customs seem to defy explanations. One is the practice by Moroccan Jews of carrying with them a piece of the *afikoman* as a *segulah* (protection) throughout the year. Another related custom is connected with the *Omer*. On the second night of Passover, just before the counting of the *Omer*, the *shammash* distributes to all congregants a

piece of new hard salt. This is kept throughout the year as a *segulah* against the "evil eye." Both these practices have been reported by many travelers, yet no one has been able to offer a plausible explanation for either.

Finally, the most spectacular Moroccan celebration associated with Passover is the *Mimouna* (or *Maymouna*) celebration on the night ending the holiday. It is a very festive and joyous celebration, and, in terms of its popularity, it is perhaps the most joyous occasion of the year among Moroccan Jews. In the home, festive tables were decorated with green stalks of new wheat and barley as well as flowers brought by Arab friends and well-wishers. The tables were laden with plates of honey, dry fruits, nuts, and other sweets. At the center of the table were a bowl of buttermilk and one of flour topped by a fresh fish and/or green beans.

The celebration began in the synagogue with a particularly festive evening service marked by the singing of appropriate *piyyutim*. At the conclusion of the service, the entire congregation would accompany the rabbi or *hazan* to his home singing along the way the traditional *piyyutim* for the occasion. At the rabbi's home, following a festive *havdalah* ceremony, traditional refreshments were served. The rabbi would then bless the entire congregation with the Priestly Blessing. Upon leaving the rabbi's home, each guest was blessed by the rabbi who managed to slip him or her several dates, a symbol of sweetness for the year to come.

Following this formal part of the celebration, people would visit other members of their families, and friends. On *Mimouna* night, every house was an open house, and guests were expected to partake of the traditional refreshments. In some communities, *muflita* (thin crepes) dipped in butter and honey was de rigueur. Prominent rabbis and *kohanim* (members of priestly families) held an open house all night long for all members of the community who sought their blessing. Indeed, many would begin their visits at the homes of most of the eminent rabbis. The streets of the *mellah* teemed with people making their way from one visit to another. Women dressed in their finest embroidered caftans. Bridegrooms would visit their fiancées bearing precious gifts (usually jewelry). Arab friends mingled easily with the crowd and were welcome everywhere. On the following day, *Mimouna* day, Jews relaxed leisurely in the park, at the seashore or a spring or any place near water. Some suggest that this has to do with the fact that the last day of Passover was actually the day of the splitting of the Red Sea.

No one knows for sure the origin of this celebration or even the meaning of the name *Mimouna*. A number of explanations have been suggested by various Moroccan rabbis (Joseph ben Naim, Joseph Messas, and Jacob Moshe Toledano, among others) at different times. Of all these explanations, the most popular among Moroccan Jews is that the word *Mimouna* derives from (or is the Arabic mispronunciation) of the Hebrew word *'emunah*, faith, that is, faith in the coming of the messiah. The source of this explanation, its proponents suggest, goes back to the talmudic statement, "In the month of Nisan the Jews were redeemed, and in the month of Nisan they will be redeemed again." Since, by the end of Passover, Nisan is almost gone, and the promised redemption has not yet taken place, Moroccan Jews reaffirm their faith in the messiah's ultimate coming, in the spirit of the dictum "even if he should tarry, still wait for him." Another popular explanation sees the connection of *Mimouna-Maymouna* with the name Maymoun. According to this explanation, Rabbi Maymoun, the father of Maimonides, died in Fez precisely on the last day of Passover. The Mimouna celebration is in lieu of a *hillula* celebrating his memory.

However, many contemporary scholars suggest that the reason for the celebration is more seasonal and agricultural than religious. These scholars associate the *mimouna* celebration with wishes for success and prosperity in the approaching harvest season. Indeed, the word *mimouna* in Arabic means "wealth and good fortune." Likewise, the popular greeting with which Moroccan Jews greet each other on both the night and day of the *mimouna, trebhu utsa' du* ("may you succeed and prosper") points in this direction. Finally, all items of food and greenery displayed on the *Mimouna* table on this night are symbols of good luck and plenty.

Lag ba-Omer—Hillula

The celebration of *Lag ba-Omer* is known in Morocco as the *Hillula* of Simeon bar Yohai. It is marked by much fanfare and great festivities that take place principally in the synagogue and in the local cemetery. At the synagogue on *Lag ba-Omer*'s eve, a festive evening service is followed by the reading of passages from the *Zohar* (usually, the last chapter of the *Idera Zuta*), the singing of the popular song *Bar Yohai*, as well as other appropriate Moroccan *piyyutim*. At the local cemetery, people pray, light candles, and sing *piyyutim* at the gravesites of local saintly rabbis (*tzaddikim*, very much in the spirit of the festivities held at the gravesite of Simeon bar Yohai at Meron in Israel. In many (but not all) communities, candles are sold in the synagogue or at the cemetery in memory of Simeon bar Yohai, Meir Baal ha-Nes, and other talmudic sages as well as renowned local *tzaddikim*. In some communities, the entire celebration including the evening service takes place in the local cemetery at the gravesite of the local *tzaddik*.

While every Moroccan city had its local saint(s), the most popular site for the celebration of the *Hillula* for Moroccan Jews was the gravesite of Rabbi Amram ben Diwan. He was an emissary from Hebron who visited Morocco in 1773 and, after a successful fund-raising tour of Morocco, died suddenly in 1782 in the northern town of Ouezzane. Ever since then, his gravesite has become a place of pilgrimage for the Jews of Morocco and the rest of North Africa. On *Lag ba-Omer*, Moroccan Jews would flock from all over to celebrate the *Hillula* in Ouezzane, where the festivities assumed the character of a national holiday. The celebration at Ouezzane was attended not only by notables of the Jewish community but by local French and Moroccan dignitaries as well. To this day, Moroccan Jews living in Israel, France, Canada, and the United States continue to return to Morocco periodically to participate in the *Hillula* celebration.

A number of general and local factors account for the prominence accorded by Moroccan Jews to the *Hillula*. First and foremost is the centrality of Simeon bar Yohai and the *Zohar* in their religious life. Throughout Morocco, one encounters study groups or *hevrot* for the study or recitation of the *Zohar*. In his *Between East and West: A History of the Jews of North Africa*, Andre Chouraqui notes that wherever ones goes in North Africa and especially in Morocco, one is likely to find groups of Jews, old and young, reading the *Zohar*. He notes further that even when they do not understand it, they read it, or rather chant it, with great fervor and concentration. This centrality of the *Zohar* has been institutionalized as a part of the *tikkun* (liturgical program) for the first night of Shavuot, *Hosha'anah rabbah*, and other occasions in the life cycle and the yearly cycle of Moroccan Jews. Likewise, the personality of bar Yohai, believed by most traditional Jews to have been the author of the *Zohar*, looms large among Moroccan Jews, surpassed only by that of Moses. Typical decorations in traditional Moroccan Jewish homes include pictorial representations of both Moses and bar Yohai.

Second, Morocco is famous for its cult of the tombs of saints among Jews and Muslims alike. In his monumental study of the subject, *Saint Veneration among the Jews of Morocco*, Issakhar Ben-Ami observes that some saints are respected and venerated by both Jews and Arabs.

Third, the general notion of pilgrimage to the gravesites of ancestors and *tzadikim* is attested in Rabbinic literature and reported in the travelogues of pilgrims to the land of Israel, who always prayed at the tombs of the patriarchs, the matriarch Rachel, King David, Meir Baal ha-Nes, and others. Finally, the notion of *zekhut avot* ("the merit of the Fathers") is given great weight by Sephardim. All these factors help explain the popularity of the *Hillula* of Simeon bar Yohai, and why it is celebrated with so much enthusiasm by many Moroccan Jews.

Shavuot

On each Sabbath between Passover and Shavuot, Moroccan Jews read one chapter of *Pirke Avot* (*The Saying of the Fathers*) as well as several chapters from Proverbs. In Meknes, the practice was that on Sabbath before

the afternoon service, boys would line up in the synagogue near the ark and take turns chanting a paragraph of that week's chapter in Hebrew and then translating it into Arabic. The chapters from Proverbs, preceded the chapter from *Pirke Avot*; they were chanted by the entire congregation, also in Hebrew and Arabic.

The festival of Shavuot is a solemn holiday and most aspects of its celebration revolve around its special liturgy. Nonetheless, some uniquely Moroccan practices are associated with it. Following dinner on the first night of the holiday, people gathered in private homes for the prescribed *Tikkun lel Shavuot*, the special program of study (or readings) for the night. This program includes the reading of representative passages from each book of the Bible, the Mishnah, and the *Zohar* (the *Idera Rabba* and/or the *Idera Zuta*). The *Tikkun* concludes with the singing of the popular song "Bar Yohai." Refreshments were served throughout the night.

During the morning service on both days of Shavuot, before the Torah is taken from the ark, Moroccan Jews recite the *kettubah*. On the first day, they recite the *ketubbah* written by Israel Najara (a sixteenth century Syrian rabbi and poet), and on the second day they read the one written by Habib Toledano of Sale, Morocco. Both *ketubbot* are beautiful and charming poems written in the style and with all the details of a marriage contract, describing the symbolic marriage between God and the people of Israel. The *ketubbah* is read responsively by the *Hazan* and the congregation in the traditional melody in which an actual *ketubbah* is read at weddings. After the Torah is taken from the ark, Moroccan Jews dance with it as they do on *Simhat Torah*, while singing typical *piyyutim* for the occasion.

At the conclusion of the morning service, the *Azharot* (poetic enumeration of the 613 commandments) by Solomon ibn Gabirol are recited. On the first day the positive commandments are read, and on the second day, the negative ones. This is a practice shared by all Sephardim, although some recite ibn Gabirol's *Azharot* before the afternoon service. Before the afternoon service, Moroccans read the Book of Ruth, chanting each verse in Hebrew and then in Arabic translation. The first half of Ruth is read on the first day and the remaining half on the second day. Following afternoon worship, they also recite the *Azharot* written by Isaac b. Reuben al-Bargeloni, again the positive commandments on the first day and the negative ones on the second. Both the poetic structure of al-Bargeloni's *Azharot* and their melody are rather complex and require expertise on the part of those who chose to participate. Participants take turns, each chanting a stanza. Any mistake on the part of a reader evokes the immediate correction from the rest of the participants, who shout in Arabic in the same melody in which the *Azharot* are being chanted, "repeat, repeat—you do not know. . . ." This is done in an atmosphere of joviality and fun.

In the afternoon of both days of Shavuot, following the festive meal, Moroccan Jews engage in one of the strangest custom for the holiday. The men throw water at each other in their homes and in the street. Everyone and anyone is a likely target. As may be expected, children and young boys enjoy these water games most. One of the explanations offered by the late Rabbi Maymoun, in his *Hagim u-Mo'adim*, is that when the people of Israel heard the voice of God speaking to them directly on Mount Sinai, they were so overwhelmed by the experience that they fainted and nearly passed away. To revive them, God sent down heavy dew from heaven, whereupon the people said to Moses: "You speak to us and we will obey, but let not God speak to us, lest we die" (Exod. 20:16). In this explanation, the water games on Shavuot commemorate this happening.

Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and Sukkot

The Moroccan ceremonies, liturgy, music, and unique customs associated with the High Holidays and Sukkot provide ample illustration of customs shared by all Sephardim and of those unique to Morocco. Following are examples of both.

The liturgy for the *selihot* service is identical among all Sephardim. They recite this service every night or every day throughout

the month of Elul and during the days between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. Syrians recite the service every morning immediately before the morning service; Moroccans recite the *selihot* in the morning before sunrise, while other Sephardim recite them at other times of the day. But all Sephardim, regardless of their origin, recite the *selihot* every day beginning with *Rosh Hodesh* Elul through Yom Kippur's eve.

Next to the prayer book for the High Holidays, *Tehilim*, the Book of Psalms seems to be the most important and popular book among most Sephardim. It is central in the devotional services during this period. Moroccans, like other Sephardim, read the entire Book of Psalms on each of the two days of Rosh Hashanah between lunch and the *minhah* (afternoon) service. With few exceptions, Sephardim also recite the full Book of Psalms on Yom Kippur between *musaf* and *minhah*. Among Syrians and Moroccans, a few individuals spend Yom Kippur night in the synagogue reciting the Psalms and readings from various Rabbinic texts.

Following *selihot* or the morning service, on the eve of either Rosh Hashanah or Yom Kippur, Sephardim conduct a *Hatarat Nedarim* or *Hatarat Kelalot* service. It is a semi-legal, semi-religious ceremony intended to annul all oaths, vows (*nedarim*) and curses (*kelalot*) uttered during the past year. Usually, the congregation divides into two groups which stand facing each other. Each group is represented by a reader who acts as its spokesman. One group requests the other to act as an earthly tribunal and declare all oaths, vows, promises, or curses uttered by members of the group as null and void, and the group acting as the court obliges by doing so. Then the roles of the groups are reversed, and the entire procedure is repeated, thus absolving the entire congregation of all obligations that may have been incurred by such vows and oaths.

Unlike the Ashkenazim, the Sephardim have no *yizkor* (memorial) service during the major festivals of Passover, Shavuot, and Sukkot. The only time any special prayer resembling *yizkor* is read is during the evening service of Yom Kippur immediately following *Kol Nidre*. This is known as the *hashkabah* or *hashkabot*, which simply means "prayer for the dead." Usually, a *hashkabah* is recited for all the past leaders of the congregation, the leaders of the community, and later for the deceased relatives of the congregants.

Special Foods and Ceremonies: Sephardic cuisine is generally known for its generous use of spices. Not so during the High Holidays season when spices are avoided and sweet dishes preferred. One interesting ceremony that is uniquely Sephardic is the *Yehi Ratzon* ceremony held on the two nights of Rosh Hashanah, a ceremony that may be described as a mini-seder. In addition to dipping apples in honey and praying for a sweet year, Sephardim eat an assortment of fruits and vegetables: dates, leeks, squash, spinach, Swiss chard, pomegranates, and sesame seeds. The ceremonial eating of these food items is explicitly recommended in the Talmud (B. Ker. 6a) and in the *Shulhan Arukh* (*Orah Hayim*, 683:1). Each item is used as a symbol to express prayers for freedom from evil and oppression and for being inscribed for a good year. In each instance, the eating of the fruit or vegetable is preceded by a prayer, *yehi ratzon*, "may it be the will of God," which plays on a word similar to the Hebrew or Aramaic name of the food item. For example, the *yehi ratzon* for *karti*, leek or onion, playing on the Hebrew root *krt*, "to cut off," asks: *she-yikaretu oyevenu*, "that our enemies be cut off." Likewise, the *yehi ratzon* for *silka*, spinach or Swiss chard, playing on the Aramaic root *slk*, "to be removed or disappear," asks: *she-yistaleku oyevenu u-mevakeshe ra'atenu*, "that our enemies and ill-wishers disappear." The *yehi ratzon* for pomegranates asks: *she-yirbu zakhuyotenu ka-rimon*, "that our good deeds be as numerous as pomegranates seeds." There is an appropriate *yehi ratzon* for every food item in this beautiful and appetizing ceremony.

Special Liturgy and Melodies. Both Ashkenazim and Sephardim have special melodies for the High Holiday prayers, and these are fairly standard. Naturally, the melodies associated by the Sephardim with the High Holidays derive from Andalusian, Greek, and Near Eastern music and therefore bear no resemblance whatsoever to those of the Ashkenazim. What is perhaps more important is that the special liturgy for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur that has developed

through the centuries is also radically different. The special liturgical poems, called *pizmonim, piyyutim, bakkashot*, or *tehinnot* that are sung by the Sephardim are all masterpieces of medieval religious poetry composed by such illustrious poets as Judah Halevi, Solomon ibn Gabirol, Moses and Abraham ibn Ezra, and others. Such popular gems of Sephardic cantorial music for the High Holidays as *Ahot Ketanah, Et Sha'are Ratzon, Elohay al tedineni*, and *El Nora Alila* are totally unknown to the Ashkenazim, just as the most popular pieces of Ashkenazic cantorial music for the season, such as *Untane Tokef, Hineni he'ani mi-Ma'as*, or *Hine Kahomer be-Yad ha-Yotzer*, are equally unknown to the Sephardim. All the Sephardic *pizmonim* or *selihot* are usually chanted loudly by the entire congregation to very beautiful, lively, and popular melodies that are surprisingly the same among all Sephardim.

Sukkot and Simhat Torah

When it comes to the holiday of Sukkot, decorations are the order of the day. All Jews, Sephardim and Ashkenazim, decorate the booth (sukkah) in one way or another. Moroccans, however, outdo themselves. They decorate not only the sukkah, but also the *lulavim* (palm branches) with shiny threads of lively and gay colors. This practice seems to be inspired by the following talmudic statements: (a) "The men of Jerusalem used to bind up the *lulav* with threads of Gold" (B. Suk. 36b); (b) "This is my God and I will adore him: [that is], adorn yourself before him in [the fulfillment of] precepts. Make a beautiful sukkah for him, a beautiful *lulav*, and a beautiful shofar" (B. Shab. 133b). For *Simhat Torah*, the synagogues were decorated with oriental tapestries, multicolored lights, palm branches, and flowers and greenery of all types, creating in the synagogue an aura of an oriental palace. On the morning of *Simhat Torah*, each child carried a tallcandle to the synagogue. All these were set next to each other around the *tebah* or *bimah*. The lit candles of various colors and designs added to the ambiance and festive atmosphere in the synagogue, while the traditional sweet melodies of the Moroccan liturgy blended harmoniously with the colorful and artistic décor. On the same morning, every boy who could read Hebrew would be called individually to the Torah. He was expected to read his own Torah portion, which he had prepared for the occasion in the *Talmud Torah*.

As everywhere in the Jewish world, the *hakkafot* of *Simhat Torah*, marching with the Torah, are marked with gaiety and excitement among all Sephardim. However, the procedure of the *hakkafot* varies among some. The Moroccans, for example, did not march carrying the Torah; rather, they marched around the Torah carrying their young children in their arms. At the conclusion of the *hakkafot*, the honors of returning the Torah scrolls to the ark were auctioned off among the women, who came dressed in their finest caftans for the unique chance to carry the Torah back to the ark. Following the synagogue service, the entire *hakkafot* ceremony was repeated in each home. A chair would be placed in the middle of the sukkah, and the adults would carry the young children, marching with them around the chair while singing the traditional *piyyutim* for the *hakkafot*. Similarly, a bridegroom and his family were expected to visit the bride-to-be on the night of *Simhat Torah* bearing all sorts of gifts. Once at her home, the entire *hakkafot* ceremony was repeated with the bride-to-be seated in the middle of the sukkah and everybody else marching and singing around her. As far as I know, these home *hakkafot* are unique to Moroccan Sephardim.

Minor Holidays and Fast Days—Hanukkah

Generally speaking, the celebration of Hanukkah in Morocco is a very subdued affair. It is limited to the recitation of special prayers in the synagogue, the lighting of the menorah in both the home and the synagogue, and eating *sfenj* or *beigners* (Moroccan doughnuts or fritters) freshly fried in oil, in commemoration of the miracle of the oil associated with Hanukkah. During the morning services throughout Hanukkah, in addition to the recitation of *hallel*, Moroccan Jews recite eight biblical verses containing

the words *ner* (lamp) or *'or* (light), beginning with the verse *ner le-ragli devarekha* . . . ("Your word is a lamp to my feet . . .," Ps. 119:105). These verses are recited as the Torah is being taken from the ark. Among Moroccan Jews as among other Sephardim, only the head of the family lights the menorah for the entire family.

The notion of "Hanukkah Gelt (money)" popular among Ashkenazic children was unknown in Morocco. Nor were there any gifts or feasts associated with Hanukkah. The simple reason is that Jewish tradition does not mandate any feasts or gift giving for Hanukkah, and in Muslim lands Hanukkah did not have to compete with Christmas. On the other hand, Moroccan children received "Purim money" from parents, relatives, and friends of the family. This is in the spirit of *mishloah manot 'ish le-re'ehu u-matanot la-'evyonim* ("sending gifts to one another and presents to the poor," Est. 9:22).

But in Morocco, Jewish children expected to receive not only "Purim money" but "*Tish'a be-Av* money" as well. The reason offered by some Moroccan rabbis for this seemingly unusual custom is that children were given money on *Tish'a be-av* in the expectation that they would use it to buy toys. It was also assumed that children being what they are would break the toys and cry, and thus they would be crying for the destruction of the Temple. This is an amazing example of a *minhag* that was instituted specifically in order to instill in the tender soul of the Jewish child love for the land of Israel.

Tu Bishvat

On *Tu Bishvat*, Moroccan Jews conduct a ceremony described in detail in a book entitled *Sefer Peri Etz Hadar*. The ceremony includes appropriate readings from the Bible and *Zohar*, and eating the *shiv'ah minim*, the seven grains and fruits (wheat, barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives, and dates) associated with the land of Israel, with the appropriate blessings. Usually, a number of wealthy individuals would host such celebrations to which they would invite the rabbis and notables of the community.

Purim

On the Sabbath before Purim, Shabbat *Zakhor*, Moroccan Jews like all Sephardim, chant *Mi Kamokha*, an epic poem by Judah Halevi that tells the story of Esther in rhyme. Adults as well as children played cards on Purim. This was done in commemoration of the lot (*pur*) cast by Haman, the word from which the holiday takes its name. Children had great fun playing with their "Purim money," but many adults lost considerable sums. Rabbis protested vigorously against the practice, but to no avail.

Sephardim do not recite the *she-heheyanu* blessing before the reading of the *Megillah* during the day. During the reading of the *Megillah*, whenever Haman's name is read, children and adults alike make great noise with all sorts of noisemakers and stamp on the floor with their feet. Before the reading of the Torah during the morning service, money would be collected from all congregants (each according to his means) for "presents to the poor." This money would then be distributed to Jewish and non-Jewish poor who made the rounds of all synagogues to collect the money that was earmarked for them.

The exchange of gifts with one another (*mishloah manot*) was limited to family members. Parents would send gifts to their married children, older brothers to their married sisters, and bridegrooms to their brides-to-be. Items used for this exchange of gifts were not merely symbolic. People would actually send full roasted chickens, special Purim omelets, and an assortment of baked goods. An interesting feature of *mishloah manot* in Morocco was that the sender would send a double portion of everything, so that the receivers could return one portion to the sender, thereby fulfilling his or her own *mishloah manot* obligation.

Following the morning service, people would busy themselves with the preparations for *mishloah manot* and for the grand feast, *se'udat* Purim, that began in late afternoon, shortly after *minhah*, and lasted late into the night. It included many traditional courses for Purim, such as special Purim omelets, shad, chicken soup with egg noodles, chicken *tajine*, and a wide assortment

of Moroccan salads. Rabbis composed special *piyyutim* for the *se'udah* and vied with each other over the number of courses they could weave into their rhymes.

Tish'ah be-Av

The fast of *shiv'ah 'asar be-Tammuz* (the seventeenth of Tammuz) was known in Morocco as the "small *Tish'a be-Av*." From the seventeenth of Tammuz until *Tish'ah be-Av* many Moroccan Jews would gather in the synagogue after the noon hour to recite the *Tikkun Hatzot*. It is a short service that included the recitation of *'Al naharot Bavel* (Ps. 137), *Mizmor le-Asaf* (Ps. 79), the last chapter of Lamentations, and several special *kinot* (lamentations) bemoaning the destruction of the Temple and the suffering endured in exile.

On *Tish'ah be-Av*, people would sit on the floor during both the evening and morning services. Before both services, they recited many *kinot*, and the Book of Lamentations is read at the end of both services. In some communities, the *mappah* (covering) of the Torah as well as the *parokhet* (ark curtain) were turned inside out as a sign of mourning. Many individuals would stay after the morning service to recite additional *kinot* written by Moroccan rabbis in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Arabic. These included several *kinot* lamenting the expulsion of Jews from Spain and Portugal. Several special *kinot* were recited before afternoon worship as well. Each one of the *kinot* had its own melody. These many melodies constitute a veritable repertoire of Moroccan liturgical music.

Popular Beliefs and Superstitions

No description of Moroccan Judaism would be complete without reference to the popular beliefs in demons, evil spirits (*mazzikim* and/or *shedim*), and the evil eye (*'ayin ha-ra'*). The belief in the evil eye in particular had a strong hold on the imagination of Moroccan Jews. While these beliefs were rarely held by rabbis or learned individuals, they were widespread among the masses. Although references to these beliefs abound in Rabbinic literature, their pervasiveness among Moroccan Jews was derived mostly from the general cultural Arab milieu, which was saturated with beliefs in the evil eye, evil spirits, demons, and jinns.

To ward off the perceived harmful effect of these evil forces, Moroccan Jews resorted to various stratagems they believed provided effective protection. These included wearing amulets prepared by self-proclaimed kabbalists, the performance of intricate rites at the site where the suspected exposure to the evil eye had taken place, and praying at the gravesites of local saintly rabbis (*tzaddikim*). At times, people would leave a jug of water at such gravesites overnight and then drink the water or anoint themselves with it. In the old Jewish cemetery in Meknes, there was even a gravesite of a *tzaddik* (known as Rabbi Solomon ben Eliezer) renowned specifically for warding off the evil eye.

As we have seen, keeping pieces of the *afikoman* and the new salt from the *Omer* was also meant as a *segulah* (protection) against the evil eye. The fear of the harm caused by such evil forces and spirits also informed certain practices and customs associated with births, weddings, and funerals, a description of which is beyond the scope of this essay.

Conclusion

While far from comprehensive, this description of the practice of Judaism in Morocco offered an overview of some of the most important religious, cultural, judicial, educational, and communal institutions of Moroccan Judaism. The focus on many religious practices that are uniquely Moroccan, such as the celebrations of the *Mimouna* and *Hillula*, as well as the cultural and literary traditions of *bakkashot* and *piyyutim*, capture the most characteristic features of Moroccan Judaism as it was practiced in Morocco and is still practiced in diasporic Moroccan communities throughout the world. It is a certain *joie de vivre* that permeates the entire spectrum of the Moroccan Jewish experience.

We have also seen that some Moroccan practices that are seemingly unusual, such as the decoration of *lulavim* and the reading of the weekly Torah portion twice in Hebrew

and once in Aramaic, are inspired by talmudic dicta, while others, such as the *Mimouna* and *Hillula* as well as the water games on Shavuot, have other religious explanations. All in all, Moroccan Jewry was a dynamic, well organized, and closely knit community, united under its communal and spiritual leaders, steeped in traditional Judaism, and informed by its classical sources. At the same time, it was full of a zest for life, represented in particular in the community's great love for music and *piyyutim*.

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Music in Judaism

While one typically expects a cultural group's music to be homogeneous and definable through melodic or rhythmic musical characteristics, due to the complex history of the Jewish people, Jewish music is neither homogeneous nor definable. Instead, reflecting the variety of the Jews' contacts with local cultures throughout time, Jewish music is largely to be characterized as an adaptation of music from local cultures within a Jewish context. But this fact—the absence of a universal feature that defines Jewish music—should not be construed to diminish its value or importance. It reflects, rather, the richness of Jewish musical culture, which must always be considered within its particular culture and historical place (fig. 103).

The history of Jewish music is known from a variety of sources. Written ones include the Bible, Midrash, Mishnah, Talmud, responsa literature, and certain historical accounts, including Philo, Josephus, the Qumran scrolls, and even the Christian Bible. These provide the primary basis for understanding the evolving role of music in Jewish life. Non-written materials, including physical evidence of musical instruments, are also important, as is iconography from frescoes, mosaics, pottery decorations, and images on coins that represent music's use. Additionally, notated musical sources provide the most concrete record, although, unfortunately, musical notation of Jewish music prior to 1700 is minimal and only a few manuscripts are extant.[1] Thus, an oral tradition provides the richest source of melodic materials. Several regional traditions, for instance, are represented in Abraham Zvi Idelsohn monumental collection, *Thesaurus of Hebrew-Oriental Melodies*, published in ten volumes between 1914 and 1932,[2] including Yemen, Iraq, Persia, Syria, the "Jerusalem-Sephardic" tradition,[3] Morocco, Eastern Europe, and Central Europe. Idelsohn's collection provided the basis for study throughout the twentieth century. Finally, present day recordings have added a vast dimension to what is available for examination.[4]

Despite this range of materials, the limited notated sources mean that broad assertions regarding universal features of Jewish music are hard to support. Attempts to uncover the sound of Jewish music from antiquity based on modern practices are especially problematic. For example, Rabbinic sources dating back two thousand years refer to the melodic recitation of the Bible, and some scholars imagine that Jews from Yemen have faithfully maintained that tradition, so as to present a living record of two thousand

year old cantillation.[5] But such claims, based on conjecture, lack merit, for an ongoing question concerns the dating of contemporary oral traditions. To what extent do present Ashkenazic and Sephardic practices represent the continuation of an oral tradition rooted in the past? Each situation must be considered on its own merits, so that, today, ethnomusicologists generally stress the in-depth study of a single tradition rather than trying to postulate broad, and often unprovable, theories on the universal nature of music in various cultures or across time.

Music in Ancient Times

The Hebrew Bible contains approximately 350 references to instruments, song, and singing, the vast majority of them in the prophetic books and Hagiographa (while over 130 references to music appear in the Psalms, only twenty appear in the entire Pentateuch). The references concern three major contexts for music: historical events, prophecy, and lamentations. Historical events include miraculous moments, at which God's power is praised and exalted, for instance, when the Egyptians were destroyed in the sea (Exod. 15:1–18, 15:21) and Hannah's "Song of Praise" after childbirth (1 Sam 2). Music marked other events as well: the blast of the ram's horn at the giving of the ten commandments (Exod. 19:13–19, 20:15), and its use to move groups of people (Num. 10:1–10), to call men to battle (Zech. 9:14–15), to welcome them victoriously from battle (1 Sam. 18:6–7), and to announce festivals and the Jubilee (Lev. 23:24, 25:9, Num. 29:1). Instruments also are associated with the transport of the ark to Jerusalem (2 Sam. 6:5, 1 Chr. 13:8), the establishment and reconstitution of the Temple service (2 Kgs. 12:14; 1 Chr. 15:16–28), and anointing of kings (1 Sam. 10:5; 1 Kgs. 1:34; 2 Kgs. 11:14).

Music's role in prophecy is deduced from David's playing of the harp, which cured Saul's depression (1 Sam. 16:14–23) by driving away an evil spirit. Other passages specifically indicate that prophets played music to bring out the divine presence of God (1 Sam. 10:5, 2 Kgs. 3:15). Finally, the use of music in lamentations is plentiful in the bible. This first instance is David's lament over Saul and Jonathan (2 Sam. 1:19–27). Biblical passages also mention mourning (1 Kgs. 13:30; Jer. 48:36), newly composed laments by men and women (2 Chr. 35:25), and the ceasing of music after the destruction of the Temple (Lam. 5:14).[6] Other contexts of music include entertainment for the rich and the kings' courts (2 Sam. 19:36; Amos 6:5; Eccl. 2:8), the inclusion of bells on the tunic of the high priest (Exod. 28:33–34, 39:25–26), and farewell ceremonies (Gen. 31:27). In all these cases, no detail is given of the type of music or the nature of the sound.

Music in the Jerusalem Temple

While the bible gives no indication of music's use in Temple worship or sacrifice, this is discussed in the Rabbinic literature, which knows of instrumental and vocal practices and the use of psalms (see, e.g., M. Ar. 2:3–6). The rabbis' depiction of the use of instruments refers to three categories: percussion, wind, and string.[7] One percussion instrument was used, the *tziltzelim*, a pair of cymbals. A drum was not used, perhaps due to its association with noisy celebrations or, perhaps, with women's activities (e.g., Exod. 15:21 and 1 Sam 18:6–7).[8] Wind instruments included the shofar and *hotzotzerah* (a trumpet) to signal events. The flute was also used, but restricted to the twelve festal days (M. Ar. 2:3). The reed pipe, mentioned at Gen. 4:21, was not used, perhaps due to the plethora of post-biblical references to its use for ritually unclean purposes. String instruments included the *kinnor* and *nevel*, lyre instruments with strings fastened to a frame, most likely originating in Asia Minor.

Levites aged thirty to fifty and young boys, who added "sweetness" (M. Ar. 2:6), sang. The literature discusses their training (M. Hul. 24a), vocal tricks (M. Yom. 3:11), and a responsorial singing style (M. Sot. 5:4, B. Sot. 30b; M. Suk. 3:11, B. Suk. 38b). A minimum and maximum number of instruments is given. The minimum of

twelve for a regular weekday included two *nevel*, nine *kinnor*, and one cymbal. This intentionally balanced the minimum of twelve Levitical singers (Ar. 2:3–6). It is unclear if the Levites sang with the instruments or *a cappella*.

M. Tam. 5–7 illustrate music's use within the service. After opening benedictions from the priests, sacrifices were offered. The *magrepha* (a large rake used for clearing the ashes) was thrown forcefully on the ground to summon other priests and Levites into the Temple; ritually unclean members were sent to the eastern gate. Two priests stood by the altar and blew trumpets with the sounds of *teki'ah, teru'ah*, and *teki'ah*. Then the cymbal player sounded the cymbal, and the Levites sang a text from the Psalms. The trumpet blowing was repeated, participants prostrated themselves, and the Levites continued singing. M. Tam. 7:4 lists the daily psalm texts.

The use of psalms in the Temple service is intriguing, since specific psalms' introductory lines—*incipits*—offer clues to their specific use and may even provide evidence for the use of music. *Incipits* may signify a melodic description, direction, or place of use or performance. Melodic descriptions include a particular person or group, e.g., Korah (Ps. 87) and Asaph (Ps. 77); a style of performance in a melodic scale, e.g., "*al ha-sheminit*" (Pss. 6, 12); or use of an instrument, such as "*nehilot*" (flute; Ps. 5), "*shiggayon*" (Ps. 7), "*gitit*" (Pss. 8 and 81), "*alamot*" (Ps. 46);[9] cue words of a known song, such as "*ayelet ha-shahar*" (the hind of the dawn; Ps. 22) or "*shoshanim*" (roses; Pss. 45, 80). The term "*selah*" appears in the middle of Pss. 46–50. Although this term is variously understood, it possibly indicates a point of pause at which the singing stopped and instruments were played. Three groups of psalms are known for their specific use in Temple worship: the Psalms of Ascent (Pss. 120–134), sung on the steps of the Temple during the festival of Tabernacles (M. Suk. 5:4, B. Suk. 51a–b);[10] the "*hallel*" (Pss. 113–118), recited on the celebration of the new month and the three pilgrimage festivals; and "*halleluyah*" (Pss. 146–150), the final five psalms, seen as the most exalted form of Godly praise, but whose exact use in the Temple service is unclear.

Music in the Liturgy

Music's role in Jewish liturgy developed alongside the canonization of the liturgical worship, which, though begun in Second Temple times, occurred primarily after the destruction in 70 C.E., when liturgical recitation replaced sacrifice and the focus of Jewish ritual shifted to the synagogue. The earliest complete compilation of prayer, the *Seder Rav Amram*, dates to the ninth century and includes biblical (particularly psalmodic), Rabbinic, and poetic texts.

Unlike the relatively small amount of poetry, neither the biblical nor Rabbinic passages that comprise the core of Jewish liturgy—e.g., the Shema and the Eighteen Benedictions—make extensive use of meter or rhyme. But other well known portions of the prayer, developed in later centuries in various Jewish communities, have rich traditions of melodic settings. These texts include *Ein Ke'lohenu*, by an unknown author, present in prayer books as early as that of *Amram; Adon Olam*, also by an unknown author and in almost every liturgical rite since the fourteenth century; and *Yigdal*, based on Maimonides thirteen articles of faith, probably composed in the first half of the fourteenth century.

In general, Jewish liturgy is divided into two rites, Ashkenazic and Sephardic, distinguished by small differences in the order of the prayers and the inclusion or exclusion of some psalms and various liturgical poems. But the statutory prayers of the two rites are the same, with only slight differences in wording. The Sephardic rite, a development originally from Spain, influenced the local rites of those European and Middle Eastern communities that received an influx of Spanish Jews after the expulsion from Spain in the sixteenth century.

Prior to the circulation of settings of liturgical texts beginning in the seventh century, the non-statutory sections of the liturgy were improvised, as, presumably, was the melodic recitation. The *hazzan*—cantor—thus created

texts spontaneously. Some thus speculate that the term *hazzan* comes from *harzan*—to versify.[11] Only in the geonic period, at the same time that the liturgical text was codified, did the *hazzan* became the religious officiant who led prayers. Thus, the musical expression of the liturgy grew out of liturgical need, function, and aesthetics.

Musical Types in the Reading of Sacred Texts

Forms of liturgical music during the first millennia are best viewed topically rather than historically, that is, by examining independently cantillation (the melodic recitation of biblical texts), psalmody (the recitation of psalms or groupings of psalms), and liturgical chant (a broad range of melodic styles for non-biblical portions of the liturgy). These musical contexts encompass the core concerns of liturgical music.

Cantillation

Biblical cantillation occurs whenever the bible is read publicly, on Monday, Thursday, and the Sabbath during morning worship as well as on Sabbath afternoons and holidays. While the melodic recitation of the bible is mentioned in the Talmud (B. Meg. 3a), the actual process of cantillation was first formalized into a system by Aaron b. Moses b. Asher during 900–930 C.E. He lived in Tiberias, and his system of cantillation symbols, *ta'amei ha'miqrah* in Hebrew, is referred to as the "Ben Asher" or "Tiberian" system. These signs, placed above and below the biblical text, provided grammatical indications for proper syntax and sentence division (see fig. 105). The shapes of the signs indicate grammatical or musical function, visual representation of melodic contour, or the shape of hand signs used to indicate the melody.[12] This later practice is mentioned at B. Ber. 62a, and Rashi comments that, even in his time, the eleventh century, the practice was still used. It remains today in some Yemenite communities.

Sephardic and Ashkenazic communities differ in their melodic interpretation of these signs (fig. 104 compares a sampling of melodic recitations for Song 1:1–3). Avigdor Herzog defines five regional styles: Yemenite, Ashkenazic, Middle Eastern and North African, Jerusalem Sephardic, and North Mediterranean.[13] Some traditions supply the specific melodic unit for each sign; others use larger melodic units for a phrase. The transcriptions of Song 1:1–3 thus can be divided into two general styles. The first three renditions, from Babylonia, Egypt and Palestine, and Morocco, are narrow in melodic range, within a fifth, and move stepwise; the last two, Spanish and Portuguese and Ashkenazic-Lithuanian, are more expansive melodically, covering a larger range and containing more melodic leaps. The first three also are more regular rhythmically than the latter two, in all exemplifying how some communities applied melodic formulas to the text rather then to each sign.[14] Traditions that apply a melody to each sign, such as the Spanish and Portuguese and Lithuanian, follow the rhythm of the text and are freer metrically. Song 1:1–3 provides an interesting contrast, since Middle Eastern communities typically sing this text in its entirety to usher in the Sabbath. A regular rhythm keeps members of the congregation together during the recitation, facilitating group singing.

Particular circumstances also influence melodic renditions of the Bible. Used in different books, for instance, the same signs yield different melodies.[15] Further, since the signs do not indicate specific pitches, one must rely on their oral interpretations for each book, and specific passages within a book may have unique circumstances that determine melody. For instance, the ten commandments have a special melody, and tragic portions of the book of Esther are highlighted with melodies from the intonation of Lamentations.

Psalmody

Unlike Torah reading, psalm chanting (except for the psalm of the day) is not a required ritual practice. As a result, the rendering of

psalms is not always systematic within a community. Used mostly within the introductory part of the liturgy, they are known as "*pesuke dezimrah*" in Ashkenazic liturgy and "*zemirot*" in Sephardic liturgy. In some communities, psalms are recited by each individual, with the leader only indicating the conclusion of each; but other communities recite psalms publicly. In general, Sephardic practices are more systematic, using regular musical formulas, than Ashkenazic ones. Interestingly, the reverse is true with biblical cantillation.

For the psalms, a system of signs with melodic indications is a lost art. Typically, psalm chanting consists only of an introductory phrase, a medial recitation note, and a final phrase.[16] This process of intonation outlines the important structural notes of a mode. An example is the Moroccan recitation of Song 1:1–3 (fig. 104c), which works similarly to psalm chanting. The ending phrase of each line of text uses the same formula (see the five-note pattern over the words "*lish-lo-mo*," line 1, and "*a-he-vu-ka*," line 3). The melodic contour of each of the three lines of text accommodates the text of each line; the major melodic activity can be seen as a descent from the note "g." The melodic line covering the first sentence (the first ten notes) then is expanded upon and varied in each of the two subsequent lines, just as figs. 104a and 104b, from other Middle Eastern communities, make use of a consistent ending formula with medial recitation on a specific note. The musical evolution based on formulaic beginnings and endings thus makes up the melodic process of psalmody.[17]

Liturgical Chant

With the development of the liturgy, the *hazzan's* role became formalized, and so did the liturgical chant. During the last quarter of the first millennium, the *hazzan* became the congregational prayer leader, facilitating prayer through musical recitation. Musical developments thus kept pace with textual innovations, although we know more about the later than the former. In addition, the development of the liturgical poem—*piyyut*—during this period saw a growth in the use of rhyme and meter and of music as a means to express a text.

Liturgical chant combines the musical features of biblical chant and psalmody. The solo chant of the prayer leader alternates between free recitation, based upon melodic cells similar to biblical cantillation, and the formulaic process of continuing melodic evolution, found in psalmody. In the Ashkenazic tradition, liturgical chant gave way to *nusah*, the Jewish prayer mode system, with melodies that mark the liturgical year. Similarly, the Sephardic tradition marks the liturgy with specific melodies, the Middle Eastern tradition, for instance, making use of Arabic modes, the *maqamat.* Within all traditions, solo chant became known as *hazzanut*, the specialized art of the *hazzan*, who intricately combined the careful recitation of the text with various melodic strategies so as to express prayer. This often led to melodic excess that rabbis, even as early as the geonic period, tried to ban. But congregants increasingly desired new aesthetic innovations through which they would experience prayer with a deeper spiritual connection. In later centuries and in various locales, the tension between rabbis and cantors thus grew in tandem with each officiant's desire to control congregants' religious needs and aesthetic desires.

Requirements in Jewish Law

Jewish law, codified in the sixteenth century Shulhan Arukh, had much to say about the use of music in prayer, in many aspects continuing concerns known already from the first millennia. After the destruction of the Second Temple, playing musical instruments was forbidden on the Sabbath and festivals (*Orach Hayyim* 338:10; see B. Erub. 104a and B. Sot. 48a). On other days, rabbis only allowed music when connected to a joyous celebration—typically, the example of a wedding is cited—since music created a joyous mood that should be limited to a religious celebration (*Orach Hayyim* 560:3; see also B. Sot. 49a). Comments on melodies are infrequent, yet they do reveal important points: the community's High Holidays

melodies should not be changed (*Orach Hayyim* 619:1); priests (*kohanim*) who bless the congregation should always sing the same melody, so that they do not get muddled (*Orach Hayyim* 128:21); extending prayers with a beautiful melody is appropriate to express the pleasantness of the Sabbath (Rema on *Orach Hayyim* 281:1); a prayer leader who uses foreign melodies should be removed (Rema on *Orach Hayyim* 53:25).

The community prayer leader was to be a man, since the voice of a woman could lead to sexually indecent behavior (*Orach Hayyim* 75:3; see also B. Ber. 24a and B. Qid. 70a-70b).[18] He should be modest, acceptable to the public (presumably in his personal demeanor), possess a pleasant voice, and be knowledgeable in reading the Bible (*Orach Hayyim* 53:4; see also B. Ta. 16a). The prayer leader preferably should be an older person who is wise, ethical, and known for doing good deeds (*Orach Hayyim* 53:5; see also Mishneh Torah, *Ahavah, Tefilah* 8:11). In all, the prayer leader's personal characteristics are more important than his voice. Music thus was to be a vehicle toward prayer but not an end in and of itself.

Musical Developments (1000–1500)

During the first quarter of the second millennium, the Jews' approach to music was more receptive than creative.[19] Evidence for this is the new theoretical understanding of music and developments in poetry. The cultural climate in Spain saw the resurgence of Greek philosophical components, and Jewish philosophers followed their Islamic contemporaries. Thus, the last chapter of Saadiah Gaon's *Book of Faith and Knowledge* deals with the eight rhythmical modes applied to music. Others followed the Greek philosophers' interpretations, focusing on music's place in understanding the cosmos. But even as these theoretical writings placed music on a philosophical level, during the thirteenth century, others stressed music's impact on the soul: "the soul can only be affected by pleasing melodies," wrote Maimonides (*Guide of the Perplexed* 3:45). Thus, music was esteemed as a vehicle to affect one's mood and to foster a more intense, experiential relationship with God. But intention was emphasized: one should use music for spiritual purposes rather than entertainment. Later, this point was rearticulated and expanded by Kabbalists and Hasidim.

Since there is no extant notated music to divulge stylistic characteristics, texts must serve as evidence. The increased interest in poetry with regular meter and rhyme surely had an impact on music. Much of the influence for new poetry grew out of the rich cultural life in Spain during its Golden Age (1100–1300). Many indications suggest that Hebrew poetry was sung, and, as this poetry proliferated, so too did the music. In 1145, Abraham ibn Ezra wrote that sung poetry should be written in equal metrical units. Presumably the regularity of poetic meter was somehow followed through musical expression. But exactly how is not clear:[20]

> It is evident from examples that a "metrical" tune need not be syllabic: a series of short notes may appear on a long syllable. To judge from present practice, however, the absolute identity of poetic and musical rhythm is relatively rare. More often the tune is given its own rhythms, but even then it will be symmetrical or cyclic, like a metrical scheme.

Jewish communities throughout Europe grew in their use of regular metered tunes, which facilitated group singing and stability of melodies.

The adaptation of music from surrounding cultures began during this period has continued until the present, despite Rabbinic opinions typically prohibiting this borrowing, for fear that engagement with non-Jewish culture would weaken Jewish life. Still, wandering Jewish minstrels played for both Jews and gentiles, suggesting their familiarity with the variety of music of their European locations. Some Jews even desired to sing the love songs of troubadours. Sources indicate that they felt their musical artistry had been lost to the Christians, so that, by absorbing Christian music, Jewish artistry would be appropriately renewed. Others argued that sanctifying unholy melodies through Jewish religious use restores Godliness to the world. Whichever the explanation, it is important that Jews engaged in musical adaptation to suit their aesthetic

tastes, which changed over time and in various geographic locales.

Music in Ashkenazic Liturgy (1500–1900)

Jews migrated into European steadily during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. By the sixteenth century, two sub-groups within Ashkenazic Jewish practice were formed, the *Minhag Ashkenaz*, denoting Western Europe (sometimes known as *Minhag Rinus*, Rhineland) and *Minhag Polin*, in Eastern Europe, particularly denoting Poland. Both trends retained the same prayer chants and cantillation motives, and even as each grew slowly into its own, migrating cantors helped melodies travel between the two regions. Thus, congregations were exposed to an array of musical innovations and renderings of prayer.[21]

With enlightenment and the dawn of modernity, Ashkenazic musical practices began to be codified, and the oral tradition was documented in written form. But the tension between preservation and creation was ongoing. Cantors and community members wanted new tunes, while others, most notably rabbis, wished to preserve older ones. This would, presumably, slow the rate of influence of surrounding non-Jewish musical practices. Cantors were known by name for the musical personalities they brought to the recitation of prayers; in some communities composers too were identifiable. Thus, the diversity of musical practice increased even as musical traditions were firmly established and put into writing.

Musical Types in Ashkenazic Liturgy—Cantillation

The system of cantillation in the Ashkenazic tradition continued to receive a significant amount of attention by both practitioners and scholars. The exactitude of pronunciation and syntax was carefully maintained. Communities carefully followed the instruction of *Sefer Hasidim* (twelfth century, §302):

> The various cantillation chants date back to antiquity. Therefore, you should not read the Torah using the chant intended for Prophets or Writings, or vice versa. Use the appropriate intonation for each section of the *Tanakh*, because these chants are all laws handed down to Moses on Mt. Sinai, as it says, "God replied with a voice" (Exod. 19:19).

Six different melodic systems of reciting the Bible emerged, with the musical signs codified by Ben Asher interpreted according to the specific book and occasion of use. The six systems distinguish 1) the regular reading of the Pentateuch; 2) High Holiday reading of the Pentateuch; 3) the prophets; 4) the scroll of Esther; 5) the scrolls of Ruth, Song of Songs, and Ecclesiastes; 6) the scroll of Lamentations. The Eastern European tradition became dominant, perpetuated among Ashkenazic Jews in America,[22] while the Central European tradition became the standard practice in London.

Jewish Prayer Modes

The mainstay of Ashkenazic liturgy is prayer modes, or *nusah*.[23] Prayer modes operate like other musical modes defined by two parameters: scalar definition and a stock of melodies variously applied. The number of modes used in the Jewish tradition is debated,[24] though the generally accepted practice today, part of the pedagogy in American cantorial schools, is the use of three modes, named for the opening words of the liturgical passage in which they first appear in Sabbath liturgy: *HaShem Malak*, *Magen Avot*, and *Ahavah Rabbah*.[25] Hence, music and text are closely associated. Fig. 106 shows prayer modes and their usage.

The *HaShem Malak* mode is similar intervallically to the western major scale with a lowered seventh (the D-natural in fig. 106c). In most instances, a prayer mode is defined by its four lowest notes (or tetrachord; note the differences in the lower tetrachords in figs. 106b and 106c). The melodic example of "*L'ku n'ran'na*" in fig. 106a displays the typical pattern of the *HaShem Malak* mode. Like psalmody, the prayer modes consist of an opening, medial, and closing formula. The melodic ascent of the first, third, and fifth notes of the mode (E-G#-B) opens this prayer, and the ending is marked by the

fourth, third, and first notes of the mode (A-G#-E; see the last three notes on the first line). The next two lines of fig. 106a, starting with the text "*Arbaim shanah*," expand the melodic outline of the first line. As the *hazzan* continues the recitation, the *HaShem Malak* mode is developed. An additional feature here is its affective association: the *HaShem Malak* mode is equated with the grandeur of God's strength.

Fig. 106b provides an example of *Magen Avot.* Note the intervallic similarity to the Western minor scale. The textual portion provided in this example comes from the start of the cantor's prayers in the Sabbath morning service. The initial gesture of this mode is characterized by a leap up to the fifth note of the mode (B), followed by a descent emphasizing the three lowest notes (G-F#-E). The typical ending of this mode emphasizes the fourth and final notes of the mode (A and E; see the last two notes of the third line). Different notes are emphasized than in the *HaShem Malak* mode. *Magen Avot* is known as the didactic mode, since it is used for extended declamation of text and does not make use of extensive melodic elaboration.

Often called the most "Jewish" of the Jewish prayer modes, *Ahavah Rabbah* is displayed in fig. 106c. Its essential feature is the augmented second interval between the second and third notes of the mode (F and G#). There is no western equivalent to this mode, though many have compared it to a similar scale found in Eastern European folk music, and much of the Hassidic musical repertoire makes use of it, as, curiously, does the Jewish standard "*Hava Nagila.*" The liturgical text "*Tsur Yisrael*," the last portion sung by the cantor prior to the Amida, provides an effective example, fig. 106c. Note the frequent movement between the second and third scale degree (F and G#), such that the unique augmented second interval is heard. *Ahavah Rabbah* means "great love" and aptly reflects the affective association of this mode, which musically expresses the "great love" for God through a unique musical sound.

Other sections of the cantor's recitation use all three modes, and the differing quality of each expresses the unique subtleties of the text. fig. 106d, taken from the Sanctification (*K'dushah*), the climatic exaltation in the public repetition of the Amida, displays this. This portion begins in *Magen Avot* on "E" and continues through the third line. The text states that "We will sanctify Your Name in the world just as they [the angles] sanctify it in the highest heavens;" the didactic mode of *Magen Avot* thus is appropriate. The text continues, "Then, with the sound of great rushing, mighty and strong, they make their voice heard," a fitting context for the *HaShem Malak* mode, which expresses the grandeur of God, conveyed through the might and strength of the heavenly voices. On the last line, the mode changes to *Ahavah Rabbah* on "E" to the words "*mitnas'im l'umat s'rafim*," which means, "raising themselves up toward the Serafim [angles], those facing them say. . . ." The point at which one is elevated towards the angel, the intimate and expressive mode associated with the great love of God, *Ahavah Rabbah*, is used. This illustrates a typical progression in Ashkenazic liturgical music, demonstrating how the prayer modes aptly express the meaning of the text and provide a symbolic commentary. *Haz-zanut* is filled with such intricate details of combined textual and musical meaning.

Liturgical Melodies

Liturgical melodies in Ashkenazic practice can be divided into two categories: *MiSinai niggunim*—literally, melodies from Mt. Sinai—and metrical tunes. These two categories contain known melodies that are sung by the cantor, congregation, or both, and are associated with particular liturgical sections at specific times during the year. The *MiSinai niggunim* represent the oldest body of melodies in the Ashkenazic tradition and encompass the recurrent melodies of the High Holidays and pilgrimage festivals. Their name is not literally understood. Many note the similarity to the phrase "*halakhah l'Moshe MiSinai*"—"a law given to Moses at Sinai," which, in Talmudic discourse, denotes a law without a biblical source. Avenary attributes the musical application of the term to A.Z. Idelsohn,[26] who attributes it to a statement in

Sefer Hasidim (§817). The Maharil (ca. 1365–1427) frequently commented on the preservation of local musical customs (leading to the designation of some melodies as *niggunei Maharil*). Idelsohn himself saw a dual origin to these melodies, oriental and medieval German.[27] No collection or tabulation of all of them exists. Fig. 107 gives the opening phrases of several *MiSinai niggunim* for the High Holidays. Note the distinctive character of each. *MiSinai niggunim* differ from prayer modes in that they comprise set tunes of greater length. But these musical types are similar in that they flexibly apply the melody or melodic fragment to the text. Since there is no exact correspondence between text and melody, interpretations vary.

In addition to the recurring melodic phrases of the *MiSinai niggunim*, the Ashkenazic tradition contains a vast array of metrical tunes, distinct in their use of regular rhythm, which facilitates congregational singing. The German tradition in particular made regular use of metrical tunes. Well known liturgical melodies in this category are: *Yigdal*, a liturgical poem sung at the end of Sabbath morning prayers; *Maoz tzur*, a poem sung on Hanukkah; *Eli tsiyon*, sung on Tisha B'av, which commemorates the destruction of both Jerusalem Temples, at the end of the reading of liturgical poems. All three melodies are in wide circulation and sung by modern day Ashkenazic Jews worldwide.

Performance Practice

Ashkenazic liturgical performance practice consists of solo passages sung by the cantor and choral responses or refrains (fig. 103). The cantor's portions frequently comprise a few words or lines at the end of the liturgical text, known as a *hatima*, "seal." Fig. 106 demonstrates this. The congregational response may be a word, such as *Amen*, or a phrase of text, done freely and therefore not notated in musical manuscripts. One particular performance practice is worth noting. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the aesthetic beauty of music in the synagogue was enriched by having the cantor assisted by two others, the three together known as the *meshorerim*—"singers." One participant was a boy, referred to as the "singer;" the other was a man, known as the "bass." Many musical manuscripts of this period indicate a melodic line to be sung by one of the three participants. Evidence for this practice is also found in plates in prayer books, e.g., the *Leipzig Mahzor*, which show the *hazzan* and assistants.

Changing Attitudes Toward Music

During various periods preceding the Jewish enlightenment of the nineteenth century, communities sought unique musical innovations. Most noteworthy are Italian Jewish composers of the early seventeenth century and Amsterdam composers of the early eighteenth century. Based on an image of music in the ancient Temple, Leon Modena, a rabbi in Ferrara, sought to reestablish artistic beauty in the synagogue. In 1605, he installed up to eight singers for polyphonic singing, a style contemporary for his time. Similar developments appeared thereafter in other cities. The best known composer was Salamone de Rossi (ca. 1570–ca. 1630), whose synagogue compositions *Ha-Shirim Asher li-Shelomo* (Venice, 1622–1623; reprinted: New York, 1953) display his fluency in the High Renaissance musical style. His interweaving of polyphonic musical lines with block chords is similar to that of Giovanni Gabrieli. Rossi was also a noted composer in the court of Mantua. Other Jewish composers of this time in Italy were Davit Civita and Alegre Porto. But not all composers of music for Jewish occasions in Amsterdam were Jewish, e.g., Lidarti and Casceres. Although the musical developments in these communities were short lived and not maintained as a musical tradition, they reflect the desire to engage in artistic music like that of the surroundings. Later generations drew from the outside as a basis for innovation, and the music reached new heights.

Ideological proponents of the Jewish enlightenment, *Haskalah*, sought to integrate the totality of Judaism—philosophy, culture, and religious practice—into the western sphere of knowledge. Opponents favored an

inward approach, seeking to solidify traditional Jewish practices with greater intensity. Musical practices, likewise, reflected a desire for incorporating external influence while, at the same time, keeping elements of the tradition, such as the *MiSinai niggunim*. Synagogue compositions of this period thus added Baroque musical interludes to traditional melodies. These musical interludes were excesses and are elaborations of the *meshorerim* practice, with each of the three participants, but most often the singer and bass, given an opportunity for melodic embellishments. At the same time, internal musical manifestations appear in Hasidic communities, which sought spiritual beauty not through elite practices but through an ecstatic experience that elevated the soul. While Hasidic music also drew from the surroundings—from folk tunes and many other sources—artistry was not the goal. Singing in the synagogue, at home, and for other occasions intended to create a deeper commitment to Judaism.

Central European Cantorial and Synagogue Music

The most significant development in Central European cantorial and synagogue music resulted from liturgical and aesthetic changes of the Reform movement. Although changes in various Central European cities began in the late 1700s and early 1800s, Reform did not take shape in an established fashion until the mid-nineteenth century. Israel Jacobson (1768–1829), a merchant by profession, initiated many changes, including elimination of the cantor, use of Protestant hymns with Hebrew words, sermons in German, confirmation for boys and girls, and the reading, not cantillation, of the Bible. With the exception of the elimination of the *hazzan*, most of his changes were incorporated into the Reform service later in the nineteenth century and thereafter. Congregations replaced traditional Jewish music with hymnal singing in the Protestant style and in some cases literally supplied known German Protestant hymns with Hebrew words. Jacobson introduced the first synagogue organ in Seesen in 1810. Short lived there, in 1818 the practice continued in Hamburg, which became an important city for the furtherance of Reform.

Moderate Reform was musically led by Salomon Sulzer (1804–1890), who trained many cantors and whose impact on synagogue music was unprecedented and long lasting. From 1926, he officiated at the New Synagogue in Vienna, elevating the office of cantor with his fine musicianship; his singing was admired by Schubert and Liszt. Sulzer's lasting contribution is his *Shir Zion*, published in two volumes (1840 and 1866; reprinted in three volumes: New York, 1953). The work collects his compositions and others he commissioned. His goal was to "purify" the traditional Jewish melodies, as he felt ornate Baroque musical elaborations inappropriate to the dignity of the service. Demonstrating the changes he made to synagogue music is Sulzer's rendition of the *MiSinai niggun* "*Alenu*." He preferred a straight forward lyrical melodic setting of the text, as can be seen in the symmetrical phrases in the opening melodic line. In addition, he sought to harmonize this melody within the rules of musical art current in his time. This setting thus begins in the key of "D," and the tenor and basses end in that key with the words "*w'gorolenu k'chol hamonom*." It then follows with a choral and cantor section in the key of "Bb." The modulation from "D" to "Bb" exemplifies the third-relationship found in the music of nineteenth century Romantic composers such as Schubert, Liszt, and Mendelssohn. Sulzer wrote out the music for the cantor and choir, with no improvisation or congregational singing possible or desired.

Another significant figure in Central European synagogue music was Louis Lewandowski (1821–1894), who served as a choral director and composer in Berlin at the Old Synagogue in the Heidereutergasse, and, after 1866, at the New Synagogue. His musical compositions appear in two well known publications: *Kol Rinah U'T'fillah* (1871), for one and two voices (reprint: New York, 1953) and *Todah W'simrah* (1876–1882), for four voices and soli, optional organ accompaniment (reprint: New York, 1953). Lewandowski's musical compositions in *Kol Rinah U'T'fillah* contain simple choral responses

designed for ease of use with congregations. The *Todah W'simrah* compositions often include organ accompaniment that were doublings of the choral or filled in the solo melodic line. When sung with the accompaniment, this adds a rich texture, but the optional indication displays Lewandowski's recognition that not all congregations would want or be able to afford an organist.

In Lewandowski's *Todah W'simrah* collection is his rendition of the *MiSinai niggun* "*Alenu.*" Like Sulzer, Lewandowski sets the known melody into a regular meter with symmetrical phrasing. In some respects, this setting is simpler rhythmically than Sulzer's. Note that Lewandowski engages the choir in a responsorial manner with the cantor (beginning with the word "*Wanachnu*"). His contributions to synagogue music can be seen as a refinement of Sulzer's efforts. Lewandowski provided settings of traditional melodies and also wrote unique compositions, some based on, some independent of *nusah.* His music had a major impact in both Reform and traditional synagogues throughout Europe and America from the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth.

Central European musical changes were in practice throughout the region: Sulzer in Vienna and Lewandowski in Berlin had the greatest impact. Another significant figure was Samuel Naumbourg (1815–1880), who trained in Munich and served at a congregation in Paris from 1843. While his pieces also are based on traditional material, he, too, incorporated the various musical styles of his surroundings, including Parisian grand opera.

Eastern European Cantorial and Synagogue Music

The Eastern European cantorial style remained traditional in focus, as few Eastern European synagogues incorporated the reforms commonly found in Central Europe, for instance, the use of an organ. Adherence to traditional melodies and the prayer modes thus pervaded the region, even as some cantors came to Vienna to study with Sulzer and incorporated his musical innovations in a style appropriate for Eastern European. Nissan Blumenthal (1805–1903), for instance, was born in the Ukraine and introduced German style music at the Brody synagogue in Odessa. He founded a choir school in 1841 and developed choral singing in four voices, though few of his musical compositions are extant. During the second half of the nineteenth century choral compositions became more common.

Two examples of "*Alenu*" settings demonstrate the innovations of Eastern European synagogue music and its differences from the Central European style. Abraham Baer Birnbaum (1864–1922) was a cantor in Poland, and his setting of "*Alenu,*" in *Amanut Ha Chazanut* (1908, 1912 reprint: New York, 1953) makes more use of the choir throughout, whereas Sulzer and Lewandowski only used it at the end. Birnbaum's settings also do not use symmetrical phrases. Eliezer Gerovich (1844–1913), a student of Nissan Blumenthal, began as a *hazzan* at the Choral Synagogue in Berdichev. After 1887, he was chief cantor in Rostov-on-Don. His setting of "*Alenu,*" in *Shire T'filoh* (1897 reprint: New York, 1953), makes use of an extremely ornate cantorial opening prior to the choir's entrance. Like Birnbaum, he did not use symmetrical phrases; melodic freedom was desired.

The hallmark of the Eastern European style is the use of recurring melodic fragments to convey a deep emotional feeling, ornate musical embellishments that transport the listener into a spiritual realm. Word repetition was not uncommon. The nicely patterned phrases of Central Europe came to be known as *hazzanut ha-seder*, that is, orderly *hazzanut*, in contrast to the free and ornate Eastern European style, known as *hazzanut ha-regesh*, or emotional *hazzanut.* This latter style became the foundation for the Golden Age of the cantorate in America in the first decades of the twentieth century (see below). But these distinct styles were also intermingled in the compositions of cantors immersed in the Eastern European musical world who also studied with men such as Sulzer. Edward Birnbaum (1855–1920), who not only composed but was also an important Jewish musical scholar, is an apt example. Born and trained in Cracow, he later studied with Sulzer for three years.

His compositions for his synagogue in Koenigsberg show a balanced style synthesizing Central and Eastern European musical elements.

Paraliturgical Musical Practices

Musical practices in non-liturgical settings reflect many of the same stylistic influences found in the synagogue. These settings include religious occasions, such as life cycle events (circumcision, bar mitzvah, weddings, and holidays) and meals, when the singing of songs with religious themes (*zemirot*), many of them based on poetic texts from the Golden Age of Spain, was common practice. Many of the *zemirot* in the Ashkenazic tradition use melodies similar to those found in the surrounding communities.

Hasidic communities found a variety of other occasions for singing songs both with and without words. The latter, called *niggunim*, are sung to a variety of syllables, e.g., "Ay, yai, yai," "Bum, bum, bum," and "Tra, la, la." Some even understood specific vocables to have significant meaning. Melodies appear in two or more repeated sections, with the second, or later section, on a higher melodic level than the first. This provides a feeling of ascending toward ecstacy. Melodies appear in the *Ahavah Rabbah* prayer mode or others (see fig. 106). A *niggun* with a regular rhythm is known as a *stam niggun*, a regular tune, whereas a melody without a regular rhythmic pulse, in a free cantorial style, is called a *devequt niggun*, an ecstatic melody sung at a special occasions to reach a deep spiritual state.

Music in Sephardic Liturgy

Due to the diversity of Sephardic liturgical music, its study presents significant difficulties. The problem is compounded when one considers that the Sephardic practices are still maintained orally, and only a limited amount of the repertoire has been notated and collected. In addition, Sephardic liturgical music has not received the same amount of study as Ashkenazic, and, hence, the research to draw upon is limited.

One other point deserves mention. The term "Sephardic" has been variously understood in Judaic studies. The word "*Sepharad*" appears at Obad. 1:20 and is thought to refer to the Iberian Peninsula. The term Sephardic refers to Spanish Jews and their descendants in various points of relocation. Use of the term becomes problematic when these Spanish descendants relocated to other existing communities. In some cases the Spanish Jewish traditions replaced existing practices as, over time, these immigrant Jews mixed with the local Jewish culture. Here we use "Sephardic" primarily to mean "non-Ashkenazic," recognizing that it is illegitimate to treat Sephardic Jewry as a single community that has remained unchanged over time.

Influences of Arabic Music and Poetry

In medieval Spain, Arabic culture richly influenced Judaism. Especially in the period known as the Golden Age of Spain (eleventh-thirteenth centuries), Jewish culture flourished in unprecedented ways, with every dimension of Jewish religious and cultural life drawing from a free interaction between Jew and non-Jew.

Most notably, in this period, theoretical writing on the nature of music permanently influenced the way music was viewed. Islamic scholars followed the ancient Greeks in examining musical phenomena through acoustics and other abstract principles. In *Emunot ve-De'ot* (933), Saadiah Gaon discussed the way in which eight types of musical rhythm affect the human temper and mood. Similar ideas appear in the works of Arabic writers on music, such as Al-Kindi (d. ca. 874). Other Jewish writers applied Saadiah's ideas to musical-moral phenomena and biblical events, such as David's harp playing for Saul. Hence, the Arabic discussion of music was fused with Jewish concepts.

The creation of liturgical poetry, *piyyutim*, significantly affected music. As Arabic poetry increased in prominence through new rhyme schemes and a consistent use of meter, so Hebrew poetry was influenced

through the work of Dunsah Labrat (tenth century) and others. With the expulsion of 1492, descendants of this rich tradition took these poetic methods with them. One significant figure was Israel Najara (1550–1620), who created new Jewish songs by replacing Turkish, Arabic, Spanish, and Greek words with Hebrew ones. In this process, some of the sounds or assonance of the text were incorporated into his Hebrew poetry, and often the melody was adapted to fit this new text. Thus, Sephardic music, both past and present, is defined by adaptation.

Musical Influences and Major Regional Styles

Sephardic liturgical music falls under four major regional styles: Spanish and Portuguese, Moroccan, *Edot hamizrah* (Middle Eastern or Arabic), and Yemenite.[28] The first two styles include the liturgy of Jews from Spain and Morocco, whose descendants traveled to Western Europe, England, and Amsterdam, as well as the Americas, both North and South, and developed a more westernized tradition. These descendants from Spain, like the others discussed below, took their tradition to these new locations and then adapted. Moroccan Jewry received a large number of Spanish Jewish refugees during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and Jewish musical traditions from Morocco have been continually influenced by local Spanish traditions, such as Andalusian. The two other musical styles, *Edot hamizrah* and Yemenite, are influenced by Arabic music. Spanish elements within these traditions are faint or nonexistent. The *Edot hamizrah* include the Jews of the Levant (Syrian, Lebanon, Iraq, Iran, Egypt, and other neighboring locales). The Arabic modal system, known as *maqamat*, is deeply incorporated into their liturgical and paraliturgical practices. The Yemenite tradition also makes use of Arabic practices. Other traditions, such as Turkish, combine some of these styles. The geographical location between Morocco and the Middle East also affected Turkish Jewish music, which contains Spanish and Arabic elements. Other Jewish traditions, such as Bukharan and Ethiopian, are in their early stages of study.[29]

The three musical types already discussed for Ashkenazic liturgy likewise apply to Sephardic liturgy, with different factors generating the rendering within each community.

Cantillation

Sephardic communities differ in their use of cantillation. As discussed above, most *Edot hamizrah* and Yemenite renderings of sacred texts follow the formulaic features of psalmody, though this may differ for communities that adhere to a specific melody for each of the cantillation signs. *Edot hamizrah* renderings, found in figs. 104a–c, represent a more normative practice for texts other than the Torah. The books of the prophets and each of the various writings may have different melodic formulas. The main cantillation signs that receive emphasis are: "*pasek*" (end of biblical sentence); "*atnah*" (mid-sentence pause); and "*katon*"[30] (end of a smaller grammatical clause). Therefore, the renderings found in figs. 104a–c for the Song of Songs illustrate a process used in other books. The Spanish and Portuguese tradition differs in using a specific melody for each cantillation sign (fig. 104d).

Chanting of Prayer

Sephardic traditions lack the equivalent of Ashkenazic prayer modes or *nusah*. Rather, prayers are chanted to known melodies or improvised. In the Spanish and Portuguese tradition, however, chanting patterns exist for the portions in which the *hazzan* prays individually. Interestingly, the chanting pattern for the Amida in the Spanish and Portuguese tradition is similar to the Moroccan. Many of the *Edot hamizrah* communities adhere to the Arabic modal system in some manner. Some of these modes include notes one-quarter in distance, which is unlike Western scales, in which one-half is the smallest interval (see fig. 108 with quarter tones in the following maqamat: Rast, Bayat, Saba, Sikah).

The Syrian Aleppo tradition provides a useful example. In the eighteenth century, and most likely earlier, Aleppo cantors developed a system of associating the weekly biblical reading with a *maqam* (singular for Arabic mode). Sad events in the biblical reading, such as the death of Sara the matriarch or the building of the Golden Calf, were associated with a *maqam* with a sad affect. Other associations exist for happy readings. This *maqam* does not affect the biblical reading, which always follows the same *maqam*, but only the cantor's rendering of the first portion of the Sabbath morning prayer, which is made to evoke the feeling of the Torah reading for the day, e.g., happy or sad. Some liturgical pieces are sung with known melodies in the *maqam* of the day; others are improvised melodically. This practice is kept alive by Syrian cantors throughout the world,[31] and Jewish traditions deriving from the Ottoman Empire follow a similar practice. These include liturgical traditions in Turkey, Iraq, and other neighboring regions.

Liturgical Melodies

Fig. 109 provides renditions of three Sephardic traditions. The text "*Nishmat Kol Hai*" ("The soul of every living thing . . .") begins the cantor's prayers on Sabbath morning. In this example, the Spanish and Portuguese rendition appears on the first line of each system throughout, the Turkish is on the second, and the Syrian on the third. The Spanish and Portuguese rendition and the Syrian are the most distinct. The former possesses a consistent rhythm and is not melodically ornate. The latter is freer rhythmically, indicated in the transcription with no meter, with more notes per word. The Turkish rendition falls stylistically between the other two, with a consistent rhythm and some slight embellishments throughout. All three renditions are similar in that they repeat musical phrases, but distinct when the musical material is repeated. The Spanish and Portuguese rendition begins with a repeated "Gb" followed by a descent; this same phrase begins with slight modifications over the words "*v'ruah*." The Turkish rendition begins on a "G," descends stepwise quickly to "E," and then leaps up to a "B." This melody repeats with the word "*t'faer*." The Syrian rendition begins on a "G" with a dotted quarter note. This melody repeats with the word "*Adoshem*." Thus, each community renders this, or any, liturgical text differently, expressing distinct nuances of the text.

Sephardic liturgical music regularly focuses on congregational participation but differs in where in the liturgy this occurs. In fig. 109, only the Spanish and Portuguese tradition has *Nishmat Kol Hai* sung congregationally. The Syrian and Turkish assign this text to the cantor alone. The Spanish and Portuguese rendition facilitated group singing through a regular rhythm and more simple stepwise musical line. In the Syrian and even the Moroccan tradition, the *hazzan* begins with a known melody and then improvises. While group singing appears in all traditions, different parts of the liturgy are emphasized. The *Qaddish* and *Qedusha* are emphasized by congregational singing, but the highlighting of liturgical passages between these phrases differs by community. Choral singing only appears in the Sephardic traditions influenced by Western music in European locales. This is evident in the Spanish and Portuguese tradition, which has a rich heritage of many nineteenth and twentieth century liturgical choral compositions.[32] Choral singing is not practiced in Moroccan, *Edot hamizrah*, and Yemenite traditions.

Liturgical Performance

The practice of lively congregational singing describes Sephardic liturgy. While many portions are recited by the *hazzan*, as required by Jewish law, congregational participation is enthusiastic and joyful. Unlike the Ashkenazic practice, in which the cantor intones the last two to three lines of a liturgical text, Sephardic *hazzanim* recite the entire liturgical text out loud. Congregants may join in the recitation, which some do in an undertone. The uniqueness of the

Sephardic tradition is not only displayed by the melodies used but also by the liturgical performance practice itself, which combines active and passive participation.

Music in Paraliturgical Contexts

Many liturgical melodies are adaptations of melodies used elsewhere within each tradition, most often adapted from *piyyutim*. The venerable tradition of Israel ben Moses Najara (1555–1625?), author of hundreds of poems and table hymns, thus is kept alive in Yemenite, Moroccan, Turkish, and Syrian communities up to the present. In many instances, following Najara's practice, liturgical melodies were taken from non-Jewish songs that became so popular that they appear in a variety of secular and religious contexts. Distinctions between sacred and secular thus are often arbitrary, as many melodies are used in both settings.[33]

The main context for singing *piyyutim* is the celebration of a holiday or life cycle event. Specific texts are associated with particular holidays and are sung in the synagogue or at home during meals, especially on paraliturgical occasions, events designated for religious enrichment but not mandated or required. One occasion is the *bakkashot*, or *nuba*, in the Moroccan tradition, practiced in some Syrian and Moroccan communities. Participants go to the synagogue at midnight or early in the morning before sunrise and sing supplications. This is intended to elevate the spirit prior to the formal morning prayers.

The *piyyutim*, like the liturgy, draw from biblical, Rabbinic, and mystical texts, in many instances expressing or amplifying an idea from the midrash. This rich body of poetry follows the model of the Golden Age of Spain, when poets took rhyme schemes and meter from surrounding poetry. Often, a popular non-Jewish song provided inspiration.

Judeo-Spanish Songs

A venerable tradition of Spanish Jews is Ladino culture. Its written and spoken dialect, Ladino, represents more than a language, illustrating the synthesis of Jewish and Spanish culture. The rich tradition of this cultural connection from the Golden Age has continued, with the amount preserved versus new influence varying among Sephardic Jews over the past five hundred years. Thus, for Jews in Morocco, Spanish influence has been ongoing, whereas Jews in Turkey and Greece have had more Middle Eastern influence. Some historians hold that the venerable musical forms of these Sephardic Jews, the *ballad* and *romancero*, are time honored traditions, faithfully transmitted and untouched by new cultural influence. Modern scholars, however, have been unable to validate this claim.[34] In all events, Ladino music has deep roots, and, as with other forms of Jewish music, a unique musical tradition is both perpetuated and revitalized by modern performers.

Judeo-Spanish music has long been conserved by women. Many of the texts of the *romancero* and *ballad* deal with women's experiences in life cycle events, are passionate or erotic poetry, or present epic tales or stories. Dirges related to the deaths of individuals in untimely and other circumstances are known as *endechas*. The *coplas*, short holiday songs, also complement the Judeo-Spanish musical repertoire. Marriage has been a particularly rich source of music for Sephardic women. The preparation of the bride for the ritual bath prior to the wedding, a bride's dowry, and her relationship with her mother-in-law are subjects of Judeo-Spanish wedding songs.

Musicologist Israel Katz, who has devoted his scholarly efforts to understanding present manifestations of Judeo-Spanish songs, distinguishes between two musical types of *ballad*. The Western Mediterranean, or Moroccan, Judeo-Spanish singing style includes regular phrases and rhythms with few embellishments. Many performers of Judeo-Spanish music within this style incorporate Spanish and Moorish musical styles. The Eastern Mediterranean, or Turkish and Balkan, Judeo-Spanish singing style, by contrast, includes more melodic embellishments in a freer and, often, less regular rhythm. Over time these two styles have merged. Katz postulates that a third grouping may

exist if one includes the *ballad* style of Greece.[35]

Ashkenazic and Sephardic Liturgical Musical Traditions

Although once the focus of musicological studies—like Idelsohn's major work *Jewish Music in Its Historical Development* (New York, 1929)—comparative analysis, which is fraught with difficulties, is no longer the goal of research. Rather, scholars seek to explore the details and complexities of a single tradition in order as fully as possible to understand its nuances. One problem with comparison is that, while similar practices appear across cultural settings—for example, both Syrian and Eastern European Jews sing the *Qaddish* during Sabbath morning prayers—significant independent cultural factors may govern the actual use of music in a particular portion of the liturgy.[36] The following discussion of the similarities of and differences between Ashkenazic and Sephardic liturgy thus intends only to help define each tradition, not to claim that both traditions originated from the same source.

An interesting similarity is the parallel between the Ashkenazic and Sephardic Western and Eastern traditions. The Central European Ashkenazic tradition involves the congregation through singing, making use of many liturgical melodies and presenting the service in a formal manner with limited melodic improvisation. The same is true of the Spanish and Portuguese tradition that represents the Western Sephardic practice. The Ashkenazic Eastern European tradition, in contrast, makes use of solo singing by the cantor, melodic improvisation during prayers, and less congregational singing and metrical melodies. So too the *Edot hamizrah* traditions make use of the same musical liturgical principles. In each of Ashkenazic and Sephardic corresponding traditions, Western or Eastern, while the principles are similar, the aesthetic vehicle differs. Hybrid traditions exist both in Ashkenazic and Sephardic practices. For example, some Eastern European cantors who lived close to Western European cities combined both Central and Eastern European practices. So too with Sephardic practices, such as the Moroccan tradition that combines both Spanish and Portuguese musical stylistic features and those of the *Edot hamizrah*.

An important feature of Ashkenazic and Sephardic practice is the use of modes. One way to illustrate the similarities is to compare the Eastern European *nusah* and the Middle Eastern use of *maqamat*, as in figure 108. The scalar content of the Eastern European *nusah* even has parallels with some of the Middle Eastern *maqamat*. For instance, the Eastern European *HaShem Malak* is similar to the Middle Eastern *maqam Ajam*; the only exception is that the seventh degree of the scale in the former is lowered, which is not the case in *Ajam*. Other similarities can be seen between *Magen Avot* and *Nahawand* as well as between *Ahavah Rabbah* and *Hijaz*. The remaining Middle Eastern *maqamat* shown in figure 108 have no European parallels, since these *maqamat* make use of quarter flats, a note between "Eb" and "E" for example, which do not exist in the Western scale.

While these similarities have been noted by many scholars[37] and are interesting, they ignore function, which is crucial, since different usages may alter the surface features of similar scalar construction. For example, in the Syrian liturgical tradition, the entire morning service (*shaharit*) uses the same *maqam* from "*Nishmat kol hai*" through the *Qaddish*, and *Amidah*. In the Eastern European tradition, by contrast, during the equivalent portion of the morning service, the cantor makes use of all three of the prayer modes. In this approach, the same mode is used from week to week for the same prayer; while the amount of improvisation varies, the mode remains the same. But in the Middle Eastern tradition, the mode changes from week to week, in line, as we have seen, with the mood of the Torah reading. Overall, then, the mode in the Eastern European tradition matches the mood of the particular text. But in the Middle Eastern tradition, the mood of the *maqam* is imposed upon the text, so as to create a desired affect throughout the prayers, not just on each isolated liturgical section. Mode and *maqam*, even though they sometimes sound similar, thus function quite differently.

Similarities also exist in Ashkenazic and

Sephardic paraliturgical usages. The Ashkenazic Hassidic *niggun* elevates participant's level of *devequt*, adhesion to God. Music, that is, lifts one's spirit. Likewise *bakkashot* among Moroccan and Syrian Jews function as ecstatic singing. While the same end is achieved in each context, cultural differences determine the specific format and content of the ritual.

Differences

Ashkenazic and Sephardic music grew out of distinctive cultural traditions that determined musical aesthetics as well as repertoire. An interesting way to illustrate differences between and within the traditions is to consider the role of the *hazzan* and the nature of the service. In the respective western traditions—Central European in the Ashkenazic, and Spanish and Portuguese in the Sephardic—metrical melodies, formality, and a concern for dignity motivate the cantor. Yet these Western traditions differ in that innovation of new melodies or new renditions based on traditional melodies was allowed only within the Central European Ashkenazic tradition. But the Spanish and Portuguese tradition limited change, preferring the same melodies and very little innovation of new melodies in the liturgical cycle.

Moreover, in contrast to both these Western practices stands the modal improvisation of the Eastern European and *Edot hamizrah* traditions. The elaborate manner in which modal music, either a Jewish prayer mode or a *maqam*, is intertwined with the reciting of the text provides for unique artistry. Melodic improvisation that follows rules within each tradition leads to a spontaneous experience of prayer. Even so, where an *Edot hamizrah* cantor encourages the congregation to participate with certain melodies throughout the service, Eastern European cantors limit the congregation to an accompanying role by humming chord tones at key phrase changes. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, choral writing is found in larger Eastern European synagogues. In general, Ashkenazic liturgical music focuses on the end product, based on style, taste, and quality of the music. Sephardic liturgical music differs through the encouragement of congregational participation and the end goal of singing to express prayer, so that experiencing the moment may override the need for "high" art music.

The portions of the liturgical text emphasized musically also differ. In morning worship in Eastern European tradition, the cantor begins at *Shokhen ad* and continues with three separate texts: *Befi yehsarim, Shechen hovat*, and *barukh atah . . . melekh gadol betishbahot*. In the *Edot hamizrah* tradition, by contrast, the *hazzan* begins with *Nishmat kol hai* and continues with *Shav'at aniyim* and *Kel hahodaot*. The traditions also differ in their conceptions of liturgical music. Central and Eastern European traditions, unlike the Sephardic, use the category of *MiSinai niggunim*. Still, Sephardic communities have melodies considered very old that do not change from year to year, in particular those used on the High Holidays.

Music in Modern Synagogue Life

American synagogue music has undergone distinct changes in the last century, so as both to continue the European legacy and to react to influences from American culture. Although the seventeenth century settlers in America were Sephardic, their influence was overshadowed by European immigration in the nineteenth century. German Jews were the first to arrive after 1820, but the mass migration of Eastern European Jews beginning in 1880 ultimately dominated American Judaism. This immigrant period, 1880–1930, became known as the Golden Age of the Cantorate. The cantors associated with it, born and trained in Eastern Europe before coming to America, either had regular pulpits for the entire year or were engaged only for the High Holidays, often commanding large salaries.

Radio broadcasts, 78 rpm recordings, and concerts proliferated this musical artistry. The recordings provide a lasting record, freezing the sound of the Golden Age for future generations. Great cantors include Yossele Rosenblatt (1882–1933), Leib Glantz (1898–1964), Mordecai Hershman (1888–1940), Leibele Waldman (1907–1969), Pierre

Pinchik (1900–1971), Moshe Koussevitzky (1899–1966), and his brother David (1891–1985). So admired were these cantors that people came from long distances to hear them sing at concerts and services. Pierre Pinchik's "*Elokai N'shamah*," illustrates some of the characteristics of their music. Growing out of the Eastern European nineteenth century tradition, Pinchik's chanting of this portion of the morning liturgy uses a slowly unfolding melody that begins with a narrow range and expands. The word repetition, "*n'shamah, n'shamah shenatata bi*," helps elongate the musical phrase and maintain a plaintive feeling. The *Magen Avot* mode and *HaShem Malak* mode are used. The long musical phrases make use of ascending and descending ornamental figures indicative of artistic vocal embellishments. The Golden Age of the Cantorate thus briefly fused vocal artistry and impassioned prayer in a distinctive style that has become the definitive form of *hazzanut.*

The Reform movement that began in Central Europe quickly spread in America, with the music of Sulzer and Lewandowski soon making its way across the ocean. By the second quarter of the twentieth century, composers sought additionally to innovate the music of the synagogue to the musical style of the twentieth century. Men such as Abraham Binder (1895–1966), Isadore Freed (1900–1960), and Lazare Weiner (1897–1982) took traditional European tunes and reworked them in accordance with Jewish prayer modes, thus producing harmonies not typically found in Western music. Binder and Freed were motivated by the same desires as Sulzer and Lewandowski in the nineteenth century, to develop known melodies for cantor, choir, and organ in a dignified and tasteful manner according to the music of the surrounding culture.

Ernest Bloch (1880–1959), a well known American composer, premiered his *Avodath ha-Kodesh* (Sacred Service) in 1933 for cantor, choir, orchestra, and narrator. The great acclaim elevated this work of Jewish liturgy to the status of an oratorio. Towards the middle of the twentieth century, two composers, Max Helfman (1901–1963) and Max Janowski (1912–1991), wrote compositions that have become standards for the High Holidays, Helfman's "*Sh'ma Koleinu*" and Janwoski's "*Avinu Malkeinu.*" During the second half of the twentieth century, musical tastes have preferred more accessible music. Composers such as Michael Isaacson draw from a variety of musical styles, both classical and contemporary, for synagogue compositions. He and others also use folk, popular, and Israeli songs. To provide interest and variety, cantors in Reform synagogues today sing diverse musical compositions from the past 150 years.

The denominations within American Judaism, Reform through Orthodox, deal with similar concerns with respect to music in the synagogue. One issue is the role of the cantor as prayer facilitator and the place of congregational involvement, an issue that is inherent in the combining in varying practices of American congregations of the rhythmically precise Central European and the rhythmically free Eastern European traditions. Indeed, where Reform synagogues were once the source of artistic innovations, this trend now has diminished in favor of participatory services. Thus, while trained cantors and many congregants still desire to utilize music that draws from the rich musical history of the Jewish tradition, others prefer more accessible music that facilitates their participation. Music thus may draw from the Jewish tradition, including Hasidic and Israeli melodies; but folk and popular styles predominate.

The use of music in Conservative synagogues is comparable to the Reform. Even as traditional melodies are more commonly heard in Conservative synagogues, the *havurah* movement that began in the 1970s created a trend of empowering the laity to participate in and shape services. The end result has been an increase in congregational involvement and a cantor who often functions primarily as educator and facilitator of congregational participation. But, particularly on the High Holidays and at special events, the rich legacy of liturgical music is still heard, combining the artistry of cantorial recitatives taken from or inspired by the Golden Age of the Cantorate, compositions based on the traditional prayer modes, and liturgical chants, sometimes with volunteer or professional choirs.

Within Orthodox synagogues, music generally serves a more functional purpose. A professional cantor is rarer here than in Reform and Conservative congregations, and the role of prayer leader (*baal tefilah*) is just that, with vocal embellishments kept to a minimum and congregational involvement primary. As in the other movements, traditional melodies are more commonly heard on the High Holidays, the only time when, in many Orthodox synagogues, a cantor may be employed. Orthodox congregations differ in their use of *nusah*. Some prefer Israeli melodies or tunes from songs popular in the community. While some are critical of the lack of artistry seen in this popular influence on liturgical music,[38] others embrace it as a way to encourage synagogue attendance. In all events, we see here the continuation of the trend that has long been a part of Jewish synagogue music's history.

Prior to the contemporary formation of cantorial programs in rabbinical seminaries, individuals learned *hazzanut* through apprenticeship and life experience, including singing in synagogue choirs. But after World War II, several programs developed to train cantors. The first, in 1948, was the Reforms movement's School of Sacred Music at the Hebrew Union College—Jewish Institute of Religion in New York. The Conservative movement's Jewish Theological Seminary of America opened its Cantors Institute in 1952, and, in 1964, the Cantorial Training Institute at Yeshiva University began preparing cantors to serve Orthodox synagogues.

Music Outside the Synagogue

The proliferation of popular Jewish music is a recent phenomenon worth noting. It is estimated that close to four thousand recordings of Jewish music have been made over the last twenty-five years. This can be attributed both to the American born Jewish baby boom population, which wants its own form of Jewish music to express its Jewish cultural and religious roots and to the now low cost of recording technology and cheap and easy production and distribution of cassette recordings and CDs. Many see Shlomo Carelbach as the father of popular Jewish music. He combined simple folk and popular music with traditional Jewish elements, such as a Hassidic style of participation in songs with consistent and driving rhythms. Perhaps most influential were his concerts, in which he shared stories and life experiences to reinforce Jewish identity. Other performers serve different segments of the community. Mordechai Ben David and Avraham Fried perform for Orthodox audiences throughout the world; Debbie Friedman performs for Reform and Conservative audiences; and hundreds of other artists use music to deepen commitment to Judaism.

Popular Jewish music is a unique art form. Traditional Hebrew texts are used in addition to English. The English songs are particularly unique, in that their texts discuss religious issues, often presenting a message concerning the modern religious experience. The popularity of the involved artists is growing steadily and has produced a small industry of producers and distributors.[39]

Other Contexts

Traditional European forms of Jewish music from contexts outside the synagogue have been perpetuated throughout the twentieth century and illustrate the endurance of certain musical genres. *Klezmer* is the instrumental tradition of Eastern European Jewry, often heard today on joyous occasions. This music reflects a musical process or context rather than a genre; there is no particular form or style of music known as *klezmer*. Certain genres, though, are illustrative of the syncretized, or adaptable, musical process, for example, the *doina*, which grows out of the Eastern European tradition of solo instrumental music. Throughout the region, this is known under different names. The *doina* played by Jewish musicians is taken both from the Romanian *doina* and the musical sounds of a *hazzan*. A *doina* slowly unfolds, followed by rapid undulations. This is very similar to the musical components of *hazzanut* from the Golden Age of the Cantorate. Like other *klezmer* selections, the prayer modes link this repertoire with the music heard in the synagogue.

A remarkable feature of *klezmer* is its ability to absorb a variety of influences and remain

viable as a unique entity. Both in Europe and America, *klezmorim* played at both Jewish and non-Jewish events, indicating that these Jewish musicians were well aware of, and participated in, the music of their surroundings. Once in America, jazz and other influences also were reflected in *klezmer*. Interest in *klezmer*, recorded on 78s and heard on radio broadcasts, waned in the 1940s, but the past two decades have seen a re-vitalization of this music in America and abroad.[40] A new generation of Jewish musicians has discovered the musical roots of its heritage and sought to perpetuate it in traditional and more innovative forms. Leading groups that draw from this tradition and innovate new compositions are Kapelye, The Andy Statman Quartet, Klezmer Conservatory Band, Brave Old World, and the Klezmatics.

Yiddish and Ladino songs also are perpetuated in the present. Many popular Yiddish songs were composed for the Yiddish theater, founded by Abraham Goldfaden (1840–1908). Yiddish and Ladino songs also continue to be sung for entertainment and in casual contexts, such as lullabies. Interestingly, like *klezmer*, their musical language draws from similar phrases heard in the synagogue, the music is based on the Jewish Prayer modes.

Other examples include a wide variety of folk and art contexts. Religious and secular summer camps and programs throughout the year make use of a wide variety of music to educate children and teenagers in Jewish concepts and religious practices. For nearly sixty years, further, new music has been composed in Israel, including children's songs, popular music, and folk songs with Zionist themes. Folk singer Naomi Shemer's "*Al Kol Eleh*" (For All These Things) and "*Yerushalayim shel Zahav*" (Jerusalem of Gold) have heightened the feeling of solidarity in the country and captured the enduring importance of Israel as the home of the Jewish people. The synthesis of traditional Jewish musical styles and forms in both sacred and secular contexts, combined with a contemporary classical idiom, has been the goal of several noted composers in Israel. The most significant was Paul Ben-Haim (1897–1984), who drew from a wide variety of Jewish and non-Jewish musical styles.

Many have argued the nature of the "Jewish" elements in Israeli music, questioning whether Israeli music is a national form or a Jewish one. The same debate encompasses American composers of note, such as Leonard Bernstein (1918–1990), whose "Jeremiah" (1942) and "Kaddish" (1963) symphonies make use of Jewish themes but also seek acceptance in the broader world of Western music. Many art music composers and popular song writers thus continue in the historical tradition of Jewish musicians, composing music that draws from the Jewish past but that, attentive to current forms as well, inspires a present generation to perpetuate Judaism.

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SOURCES FOR FIGURES 104–109

104. Cantillation of *Shir HaShirim* 1:1–3
    a. Babylonia: Idelsohn HOM, vol. 2, p. 54.
    b. Egypt and Palestine: Idelsohn HOM, vol. 2, pp. 54–55.
    c. Morocco: Idelsohn HOM, vol. 5, p. 41.
    d. Spanish and Portuguese, Abraham Lopes Cardozo, *Selected Sephardic Chants* (New York, 1991), pp. 18–19.

e. Ashkenazic-Lithuanina (A.W. Binder): from A.W. Binder, *Biblical Chant* (New York, 1959).
105. Biblical Cantillation Signs.
106. Jewish Prayer Modes Used in Shabbat Liturgy: Idelsohn HOM, vol. 8, pp. 8, 16, 18, 19.
107. MiSinai Niggunim: Hanoch Avenary, "Music," in *Encyclopedia Judaica*, vol. 12, cols. 151–152.
108. Eastern European *Nusah* and Middle Eastern *Maqamat*
109. Sephardic Liturgy "*Nishmat Kol Hai*"
a. Spanish and Portuguese: Transcription of recording, *Shearith Israel Choir: Music of Congregation Shearith Israel*, "Songs of the Sabbath," vol. 2, side A, band 8; transcription by Mark Kligman.
b. Turkey: Cantor Isaac Behar, *Sephardic Sabbath Chants* (Cedarhurst, 1992), p. 72.
c. Syria: Cantor Isaac Cabasso, Sephardic Archives, Brooklyn NY; transcription by Mark Kligman.

Notes

[1] The earliest are the notations of a twelfth-century cleric, Obadiah, found in the Cairo Genizah. See Israel Adler, "The Notated Synagogue Chants of the 12th Century of Obadiah, the Norman Proselyte," in Eric Werner, ed., *Contributions to a Historical Study of Jewish Music* (New York, 1976). These have been recorded as *Chants Mystiques: Hidden Treasures of a Living Tradition* (PolyGram Special Markets, 1995). Biblical cantillation was first notated melodically by Johannes Reuchlin, *De accentibus et orthographia linguae hebraicae* (Haguenau, 1518). See Hanoch Avenary, *The Ashkenazic Tradition of Biblical Chant Between 1500 and 1900* (Tel Aviv, 1978).

[2] For a useful guide to this collection, see Eliyahu Schleifer, "Idelsohn's Scholarly and Literary Publications: An Annotated Bibliography," in *Yuval* vol. 5, *The Abraham Zvi Idelsohn Memorial Volume* (1986), pp. 63–92.

[3] This refers to Sephardic Jews of the Levant who immigrated to Israel during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In Israel, they developed a unified and identifiable musical and liturgical tradition rather than differentiating themselves by country of origin.

[4] The National Sound Archives of the Jewish National University Library in Jerusalem claims as of 1996 to hold 6,500 reels, 1,000 cassettes, 400 discs, and 12,730 records and other forms of recordings.

[5] Abraham Z. Idelsohn, *Jewish Music in its Historical Development* (New York, 1929), pp. 35–71.

[6] Singing and instrument playing at funerals is discussed at M. Shab. 23:4, M. B.M. 6:1, M. Ket. 4:4, and M. M.Q. 3:8.

[7] See Bathja Bayer, "Music, History, Biblical Period," in *Encyclopedia Judaica*, vol. 12, cols. 559–566, and Eric Werner, "Jewish Music," in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (New York, 1980), pp. 618–620.

[8] Werner, ibid., p. 619.

[9] The words "*shiggayon*," "*gitit*," and "*alamot*" are often left untranslated, since their exact meaning is uncertain.

[10] Alternatively, these psalms were composed on the return from Babylon to Jerusalem or on the pilgrimage up to Mt. Zion on the three festivals.

[11] Macy Nulman, *Concise Encyclopedia of Jewish Music* (New York, 1975), p. 102. But note that the term once referred to a teacher of children (M. Shab. 1:3), superintendent of prayer (M. Yom. 7:1, M. Sot. 7:8), or one who announced the order of the proceedings (Y. Ber. 4:7, 9d).

[12] Hanoch Avenary, *Studies in the Hebrew, Syrian and Greek Liturgical Recitative* (Jerusalem, 1963).

[13] "Masoretic Accents," in *Encyclopedia Judaica*, vol. 11, cols. 1098–1112.

[14] For a thorough study of Yemenite cantillation in a style similar to psalmody, see Uri Sharvit, "The Realization of Biblical Cantillation Symbols (*Te'amim*) in the Jewish Yemenite Tradition," in *YUVAL* 4 (1982), pp. 179–210.

[15] Twenty-one of the Bible's books—known as the *Khaf-Aleph* (that is, "twenty-one") books—utilize signs that function the same grammatically. The three other books, with a different use of signs, are know as *EMeT: Eiyov* (Job), *Mishlei* (Proverbs), and *Tehillim* (Psalms).

[16] Hanoch Avenary, "Music," in *Encyclopedia Judaica*, vol. 12, cols. 571–576.

[17] The Christian use of psalms led many scholars to believe that the early music of the church was based on Jewish models: Idelsohn, *Jewish Music in Its Historical Development*, pp. 62–64, and Eric Werner in his seminal *The Sacred Bridge* (New York, 1959–1984). Chant scholars see Werner's conclusions as speculative: Peter Jeffrey, "Werner's *The Sacred Bridge*, Volume 2: A Review Essay," in *Jewish Quarterly Review* 77 (1987), pp. 283–298.

[18] Treatment of the female voice in Jewish law is complicated. The Talmud prohibits a man's hearing a women's voice during recitation of the Shema. Is this the only context in which it is prohibited? Opinions vary. See Saul Berman, "Kol 'Isha," in Leo Landman, ed., *Rabbi Joseph H. Lookstein Memorial Volume* (New York, 1980), pp. 45–66.

[19] Avenary, "Music," col. 592.

[20] Ibid., col. 595.

[21] The difference between western and eastern traditions is documented in Abraham Baer, *Baal T'Fillah* (1865; reprint: New York, 1953).

[22] A useful resource that clearly documents the Eastern European practice is A.W. Binder, *Biblical Chant* (New York, 1959).

[23] The term *nusah* also refers to a liturgical tradition, either "*nusah Ashkenaz*" or "*nusah Sepharad*," corresponding to the Ashkenazic or Sephardic liturgical tradition. The Yiddish term is "*shtayger*."

[24] Hanoch Avenary, "The Concept of Mode in European Synagogue Chant," in *YUVAL*, vol. 2 (1971), pp. 11–12.

[25] This practice derives from Baruch Cohon, "Structure of the Synagogue Prayer Chant," in

Journal of the American Musicological Society 3, 1950, pp. 17–32 (reprinted: *Journal of Synagogue Music* 11/1, 1981).

[26] Hanoch Avenary, "The Cantorial Fantasia of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries: A Late Manifestation of the Musical Trope," in *YUVAL*, vol. 1, 1968, pp. 68, note 6.

[27] A.Z. Idelsohn, "Der Missinai-Gesang der deutschen Synagoge," *Zeitschrift für Musikwissenschaft*, vol. 8, 1926, pp. 449–472; a revised version appears in English in his *Thesaurus of Hebrew-Oriental Melodies*, vol. 7, 1933, chap. 5. Werner took Idelsohn's ideas a step further and noted parallels between the *MiSinai niggun* "*Aleinu l'shabeah*" and a Gregorian chant, "Sanctus and Agnus Dei," of the ninth mass. See *A Voice Still Heard* (University Park and London, 1976), pp. 43–45.

[28] This discussion looks at twentieth century practices. Due to the lack of historical sources, we use a comparative approach, understanding these traditions through their similarities and differences. But similarities between two geographically distinct Jewish cultures do not necessarily indicate the existence of a single "original" practice.

[29] Mark Slobin, "Notes on Bukharan Music in Israel," in *YUVAL*, vol. 4 (1982), pp. 225–239; Kay Kaufman Shelemay, *Music, Ritual and Falasha History* (East Lansing, 1986).

[30] These cantillation signs are equivalent to the Ashkenazic*sof pasuk*, *etnahta*, and *zakef katon*.

[31] See Mark Kligman, "Modes of Prayer: Arabic *Maqamat* in the Sabbath Morning Liturgical Music of the Syrian Jews in Brooklyn," Ph.D. dissertation, New York University, 1997.

[32] Edwin Seroussi, *Spanish-Portuguese Synagogue Music in Nineteenth-Century Reform Sources from Hamburg: Ancient Tradition in the Dawn of Modernity* (Jerusalem, 1996).

[33] Kay Kaufman Shelemay, "The Study of Sacred Music: A Perspective from Ethnomusicology," in Paul Brainard, ed., *Reflections on the Sacred: The Musicological Perspective* (New Haven, 1994), pp. 26–33.

[34] On the former view, see Edith Gerson-Kiwi, "On the Musical Sources of the Judeo-Hispanic Romance," in *The Musical Quarterly* 50, 1964, pp. 31–43 (reprinted in *Migrations and Mutations of the Music in East and West—Selected Writings*, Tel Aviv, 1980). On the latter, see Israel J. Katz, "The 'Myth' of the Sephardic Musical Legacy from Spain," in *Proceedings of the Fifth World Congress of Jewish Studies* 4, 1973, pp. 237–43, and Kay Kaufman Shelemay "Mythologies and Realities in the Study of Jewish Music," in *Journal of the International Institute for Traditional Music* 37/1, 1995, pp. 24–38.

[35] Israel J. Katz, "A Judeo-Spanish Romancero," in *Ethnomusicology* 12/1, 1968, pp. 72–85.

[36] Amnon Shiloah, *Jewish Musical Traditions* (Detroit, 1992), pp. 13–15.

[37] Idelsohn, *Jewish Music in Its Historical Development*, p. 88; Johanna Spector, "Chant and Cantillation," in *Musica Judaica* 9 (1986–1987), p. 12.

[38] Samuel Adler, "Sacred Music in a Secular Age," in Janet Walton and Lawrence Hoffman, eds., *Sacred Sound and Social Change* (Notre Dame and London, 1992), pp. 289–299.

[39] Mark Kligman, "On the Creators and Consumers of Orthodox Popular Music in Brooklyn," in *YIVO Annual*, vol. 23 (1996), pp. 259–293.

[40] Mark Slobin, "Klezmer Music: An American Ethnic Genre," in *Yearbook for Traditional Music* 16 (1984), pp. 34–41.

Mysticism, Judaism and

It is a commonplace in the history of religions to assume that most, if not all, religions have a tradition of mysticism associated with them. Generally speaking, the mystical element is linked to intense and often extreme forms of consciousness that relate one way or another to an encountering of ultimate reality, identified in theisitc religions as God. But can we really speak of a universalist phenomenon called "mysticism"? Or is it better to speak of mysticism relative to the specific context in which it appears? If the former, what are the defining qualities of this cross cultural phenomenon? If the latter, how can we continue to use the word "mysticism" to refer to diverse phenomena from different sociopolitical and ideological settings?

To date, there is no universal consensus among scholars regarding the precise meaning of the term "mysticism." Indeed, in recent years, a number of scholars have challenged the popular conception of mysticism as a perennial philosophy hardly altered by differences of clime or creed, according to the felicitous and memorable phrasing of William James. Thus, in contrast to earlier phases of the scholarly debate, it is now generally assumed that one must be careful to distinguish the mystical phenomenon as it appears in each religious or cultural context. In one form or another, this contextualist orientation has had a major impact on the way scholars view mysticism in the history of religions. Being more attentive to context, however, does not necessarily preclude the possibility of positing a basis for comparative analysis. On the contrary, precisely such attentiveness to detail may allow one to speak most meaningfully

of mysticism in a comparative perspective.

It therefore may still be viable to chart common characteristics of mysticism, even if we must then decipher clearly how each of these characteristics is manifest in the particular context. Some of the recurring characteristics that may be culled from the literary testimonies of mystics in various traditions are as follows:

(1) Standing in the immediate presence of the ultimate ground of being, the formless and nameless source in which the multiplicity of beings is unified in a nondifferentiated manner (an orientation that is sometimes designated as pantheism or acosmism).
(2) Union with this ground of being, which is predicated on overcoming the ontological boundary separating it from the self (either in the sense of absorption or of deification).
(3) The intuitive experience of the preontological ground of being characterized by the transcendence of the correlation of opposites, which marks the formal logical structure that conditions the human account of everyday experience.
(4) Secret gnosis and poetic inspiration gained through the disclosure of this ground of being, which is the absence that makes possible the presencing of all beings.
(5) The inevitable need to express the ineffability of the ultimate experience, which is related to the recognition that language itself is the only adequate means through which thought leads to the unspoken.
(6) Special meditational techniques and contemplative practices that induce the ecstasy or enlightenment that ensues from the encounter with the nothingness of being.
(7) The adoption of an ascetic lifestyle, related principally to a negative assessment of the material body and the concomitant need to curtail, if not abrogate, physical pleasures, a lifestyle that in some traditions betokens liberation of consciousness and/or messianic redemption.

Many scholars still identify as quintessential the experience of the oneness of reality in the unity of consciousness. Mysticism is defined, therefore, as the immediate and direct encounter with the one true source of all being. Through the contemplative experience of this oneness, all things are unified. The splintering of consciousness into subject and object is thus overcome in the *unio mystica*. For that reason the contemplative state often is marked as that which cannot be expressed. The conventional dichotomies of linguistic expression yield the silence of mystical enlightenment.

A recurring aspect of the *via mystica*, indeed, according to many, the distinguishing feature of mysticism, is the quest for this underlying unity in reality. As Ludwig Wittgenstein put it in his *Tractus*, "The feeling of the world as a limited whole is the mystical feeling" (6.45). The nature of the unitive consciousness may vary from tradition to tradition. For Christian, Jew, and Muslim, the transcendent being of scriptural faith is the personal God (theism), and thus the mystical experience is often portrayed in these traditions as a particular way of life that facilitates encountering the divine presence. However, in these very traditions (especially as they evolved in the Middle Ages, in part due to the influence of Neoplatonic thought), the experience of the mystic may point beyond the morphic form to that which is absent in its presence. Alternatively, the mystical element in these religions may take the form of nature mysticism or pantheism, which in some measure approximates the expression of a mystical animus in Eastern traditions. For example, the Hindu mystic confronts the ground of being as the impersonal. Hence, the mysticism of Hinduism, reflected in Sankara and Vedanta, is sometimes referred to in Western modes of discourse as monistic. For the Chinese mystic, whether Buddhist or Taoist, the unitive source is the force of nature or the cosmic play that is expressed in the polarity of the way, the being that is nothing and the nothing that is being. In the different religious traditions, moreover, there is evidence for what William Stace calls the introvertive as opposed to the extrovertive mysticism, that is, the discovery of the ultimate unity in the internal world of mind, heart, or soul. The one in which the many is unified is thus found at the bottom of one's self, which is absorbed or expanded into the grand self or spirit, the consciousness of being as such.

The texture of the mystical union likewise may vary from one religion to another. Some mystics describe a complete annihilation of self within the consciousness of spirit, whereas other mystics, theistic in

nature, stress communion with the personal God. Communion, as distinct from union, preserves the sense of individuality of the mystic even as she or he is unified with the divine. In the latter case, moreover, the unitive experience is often related to erotic imagery, an especially apt field of symbolic discourse insofar as, in the experience of sexual union, boundaries of embodied self are traversed even as identities of personality are preserved. So the mystic stands in relation to the divine.

Esotericism and the Role of Secrecy in Jewish Mysticism

The distinctive turn to mysticism in the Jewish tradition requires an esoteric dimension. The employment of the term "mysticism" is more than the cultivation of experiences that are in some sense replications of prophetic epiphanies. What makes these re/visions the subject matter of mysticism within the religious history of Judaism is the further presumption regarding the hidden significance these experiences are supposed to preserve. The symbolic language of poetic description represents not only the narrative recounting of an experience, which may in any case overflow the linguistic boundaries or normal modes of discourse (as Wittgenstein and others have argued); on the contrary, the poetic symbol for visionary and exegete alike is a marker on the way that brings the archaic meaning of the novel experience into the light of day. The act of mystical reading, therefore, facilitates a process of revisioning, and thus the gap separating text and experience, vision and interpretation, is effectively closed. However, as Norman O. Brown once pointed out, the nature of mystery as such, to be distinguished from the sense of wonder that is the source of philosophy, involves the secret, which must display itself in words that remain concealed. In this respect, the occult embraces the character of the poetic word, for poetry, too, is predicated on the paradox of saying that which cannot be said, uttering a truth that remains veiled in its revelation.[1]

The contextualization of the mystical within a framework of esotericism is characteristic of the hermeneutical strategy employed repeatedly in the sources that scholars have studied under the rubric of Jewish mysticism. Indeed, I would suggest that the more appropriate term to characterize this body of lore is esotericism, *hokhmat ha-nistar*, a set of doctrines and practices that are deemed secretive and must therefore be transmitted orally to a small circle of initiates. It is plausible that in *Sefer Yesirah*, one of the earliest documents of Jewish mystical and magical speculation, parts of which may derive from occult circles active in late antiquity, we have a reference to just such a practice. The text has been preserved as a composite made up of distinct units welded together in a complicated and for the most part inscrutable process of redaction. In one of the distinct tradition-complexes preserved in the first part of the text that deals with the enigmatic term *sefirot*, we read of an injunction to search out the nature of these ten *sefirot* in what appears to be a meditational practice of visualization. This is followed, however, by the suggestion that one must retreat from the contemplative gaze, for "upon this matter was the covenant made," *'al davar zeh nikhrat ha-berit*. Although this passage is not entirely transparent, it appears to allude to some practice whereby a fraternity of mystics were bound together by an oath of secrecy related to the visionary contemplation of the imaginal form of the divine anthropos.

In subsequent generations, we often find more explicit references to practices of such a nature. Medieval kabbalistic texts contain constant reminders that the esoteric doctrines and practices must be conveyed by oral transmission from master to disciple. Ostensibly, this would privilege orality as the main vehicle by which the mystical secrets were transmitted. Yet, the act of oral transmission should not be construed simply as an intellectual exercise. On the contrary, the very process of transmitting and receiving secrets is a form of visionary gnosis. The speaking of the word by the master is not only the linguistic context within which the mystical experience takes shape, but it is itself a form of that experience. Moreover, inasmuch as later kabbalists presumed that the secrets were encoded in the biblical (and to some degree Rabbinic) texts,

there is no rigid division of orality and literacy, spoken and written language. The oral exposition of the secret requires the exegesis of a canonical text. This I take to be the hermeneutical circle that informs us about the very core of the mystical phenomenon within Judaism.

Placing the notion of secrecy at the center of our focus facilitates as well the appreciation of a constant dialectic that has characterized the nature of the mystical experience articulated in the Jewish sources: the concomitant concealment and disclosure of secretive matters. This is expressed, for instance, by the Zoharic description of the divine as "hidden but revealed." Concealment and disclosure are not mutually exclusive antinomies separable by the power of logical reasoning into distinct categories; on the contrary, in the lived experience of mystical insight, the two overlap such that the concealment is a form of disclosure and the disclosure a form of concealment. Indeed, the insight for the kabbalists with respect to the nature of secrecy is that the process of unveiling is itself a form of concealment. This paradoxical experience is often expressed by kabbalists through the image of a garment applied to the light by which the divine is manifest: from one perspective the garment conceals, but from another it reveals. In the mystical gnosis, these are not logical antinomies. On the contrary, the garment reveals in the manner that it conceals that which it reveals, and it conceals in the manner that it reveals that which it conceals.

Vision of the Glory and the Ocularcentric Nature of Jewish Mysticism

The demarcation of the mystical phenomenon within the history of Judaism is a particularly difficult matter that has eluded the grasp of most scholars who labor in this field. There are many reasons for the difficulty in establishing a precise taxonomy for Jewish mysticism, not least of which is the impressive degree of factual/textual specificity that characterizes this multifaceted phenomenon—if we are even correct in referring to a "phenomenon" in the singular. How do we isolate a critical nerve that animates the mystical element in its multiple historical configurations? Perhaps it is not possible. Where does one even begin to chart the history of Jewish mysticism? Indeed, we must even ask, Is the term "Jewish mysticism" the most effective way to describe the many phenomena that scholars have come to classify under this rubric?

A scholar's decision regarding what can be considered part of the history of Jewish mysticism very much depends on a hermeneutical decision concerning the nature of mysticism more generally. For many years, the field has been determined by Gershom Scholem's decision to begin the history of Jewish mysticism in the postbiblical period. Thus, while acknowledging that intense religious moments were captured in the literary narrative of Scripture, Scholem was rather adamant on insisting that no personality mentioned in the biblical text could be considered properly a mystic and no experience recorded therein mystical. But is this the only or even the best response? Is there a way of construing mysticism such that it might encompass the extraordinary experiences of the divine, traces of which have been left behind in the biblical texts? Is it legitimate to characterize some of these experiences as moments of mystical illumination? In particular, can we look anew at descriptions of the glory (*kavod*) and of the name (*shem*) in different strata of ancient Israelite culture to discern the possible sources for two of the major foci of later mystical thinking? Can we, that is, hold Scripture up as a lens through which to revision ancient theosophic traditions about the divine glory and its holy name without being accused of uncritical traditionalism or anachronism?

If we identify the mystical phenomenon in the history of Judaism more precisely in terms of the criterion of standing in the presence of God, often experienced in the theophanic image of the divine anthropos, then it may indeed be plausible to speak of mysticism in a biblical context. As I have argued in several studies, the contemplation of the imaginal body of God, which entails the meditative construction of the form of the divine anthropos in the imagination, is

a recurring theme in ancient and medieval Jewish mysticism and in the ethical and homiletical literature based thereon.[2] With respect to this seminal issue, it is necessary to contextualize the mystical phenomenon in a broader phenomenological framework: the history of Judaism has been marked by a perennial clash between the view that God is not susceptible to portrayal by images and the basic religious need to imagine the divine in figurative representation. Precisely some such need lies at the heart of the mystical vision within the aniconic traditions of Judaism. The problem of the visionary experience of God represents one of the major axes about which the wheel of Jewish mystical speculation in its various permutations turns. Indeed, literary evidence attests that the religious experience described in the different currents of Jewish mysticism is overwhelmingly visual. Ironically enough, the lack of fixed iconic representation in ancient Israelite religion and subsequently in the diverse forms of Judaism from the period of the Second Temple onwards provided the ongoing context for the imaginative visualization of divinity.

It is certainly the case that mystics in subsequent stages of Jewish history envisioned the biblical material in precisely these terms. What emerged as the central concern of the prophetic tradition of ancient Israel was the visionary capabilities of imaging God in fire, cloud, or human form. It is for this very reason that Ezekiel, the sixth-century prophet who dwelt both in the land of Israel and in Babylonia, emerged as the key figure in the mystical currents of post-biblical Judaism. The vision that Ezekiel recounted in the first and tenth chapters of his book became the prototype of mystical vision, which some rabbis in the Palestinian academies of the first and second centuries C.E. actually thought better not studied publicly or even read as a prophetic portion on the holiday of Pentecost, rabbinically the commemoration of the Sinaitic revelation of the Torah. Current liturgical practice reflects the alternative view that allowed for the use of the first chapter in the synagogue. And for good reason: there is an intrinsic connection between the theophany at Sinai and the epiphany of the glory upon the chariot/throne, a symbolic message that needs to be carried through ritual praxis. Heeding that message properly will go a long way in establishing the taxonomy of the term mysticism when applied to subsequent stages in Jewish history.

The culmination of Ezekiel's visionary encounter is the imaging of what the prophet refers to as the "appearance of the likeness of a human," *demut kemar'eh adam*, seated upon the "appearance of a throne," *demut kisse'*, which was "in the likeness of a sapphire stone," *kemar'eh even sappir* (Ezek. 1:26). The human form is further described in images of luminosity. Thus, above the loins, he is depicted by the neologism *hashmal*, which clearly has something to do with a radiant presence, and from the loins down he is characterized as the splendor surrounded by light, also described as the aura of the rainbow. Rather than viewing this elaborate vision as a circumlocution to avoid attributing an explicitly anthropomorphic image to the glory, it is necessary to recognize in the scriptural text a theophanic tradition regarding the anthropomorphic shape of the divine. In the variegated history of Jewish mysticism, the vision of Ezekiel served this very purpose. Beyond the attribution of an imaginal body to the glory, in and of itself an extremely important dimension of the biblical conception of the divine epiphany, the particular image of enthronement later served as a key symbolic depiction of the sacred union in the divine realm between the masculine glory and the feminine throne. This union was interpreted by mystics through the generations as alluding to the secret of *ma'aseh merkavah*, the esoteric account of the chariot.

The mythic image of the glory riding upon the chariot thus assumed supreme significance in Jewish mystical sources, for it conveyed symbolically the notion of the *hieros gamos*. Already in one of the compositions that is part of the ancient mystical speculation on the chariot, *Hekhalot Rabbati*, the throne is described as the bride who addresses the glorious king, or her bridegroom, and entreats him to glorify himself by sitting upon her.[3] The use of the enthronement motif to convey the erotic union of masculine and feminine potencies in the

divine should not come as a surprise given the sense of power that is related to the image of enthronement, on the one hand, and the eroticized nature of power relations, on the other. Certainly, in later kabbalistic texts, the sexually charged implications of this image are fully exploited. Thus, to cite one illustration, a passage from the Zohar is recited liturgically by certain communities prior to the start of the Friday evening service, under the title *Raza' de-shabbat*, the mystery of Sabbath (Zohar 2:135a-b):

> The blessed holy one is one above, and he does not sit upon his throne of glory until she is unified in the secret of the one as he is, so that they will be one together with one. . . . The prayer of Sabbath evening: the holy throne of glory is unified in the secret of the one and she is prepared for the supernal holy king to rest upon her.

The mystical significance of the evening prayer, therefore, is related to the process of unifying the throne, which is the feminine principle, or the Shekhina, so that she is prepared to be unified with the holy king who sits upon her, clearly a euphemistic expression of the holy union between the male and female.

The philosophical principle underlying the mythical symbol is articulated succinctly by the sixteenth-century kabbalist Moses Cordovero:[4]

> Just as there is a sublime delight for the throne when the glory dwells and hovers upon her, for she receives the good from the supernal benefactor, so too the supernal benefactor delights, and the glory is elevated and rests inasmuch as it bestows goodness, dwells, and hovers upon his throne, for it is his way to benefit that which is other than him.

Without ignoring the important historical developments that have characterized the evolution of the mystical phenomenon in Judaism, I would advocate the acceptance of some unchanging structures of thought that have had an impact on both belief and practice. The symbolic image of the male glory sitting upon the female throne is an example of precisely such a structure. The enduring appeal of the mythic image of enthronement on the remarkably fluid and fertile imagination of the Jewish mystics attests to its ability to call forth a primordial symbol that dramatically conveys the sense of divine power and unity. Furthermore, the experience of visualizing the enthroned glory affords the mystic visionary the opportunity to participate in the most sacred moment in the divine realm, wherein the masculine and feminine potencies are united in erotic embrace. The witnessing of this experience eroticizes the texture of the mystic's own visionary encounter. The nexus of vision and eros adds yet another dimension to the centrality of the notion of secrecy to the Jewish mystical tradition. That is, the erotic nature of the visionary experience necessitates the concealment of that which is visualized; indeed, it is the hiddenness of the divine that is the ultimate object of the vision. The ultimate paradox that marks the way of the mystical vision in the Jewish sources can be formulated simply: the God that is seen is the invisible God.

Imagination and Mystical Intentionality

The epistemological foundation for the vision of God in Jewish mystical sources is located in the symbolic imagination, that is, the divine element of the soul that enables one to gain access to the realm of incorporeality by transferring or transmuting sensory data and/or rational concepts into symbols. The primary function of the imagination, therefore, may be viewed as poetical. Through the images within the heart, the locus of the imagination, the divine, whose pure essence is incompatible with all form, is nevertheless manifest in a form belonging to the imaginative presence. The paradox that the hidden God appears to human beings in multiple forms—including, most significantly, that of an anthropos—is the enduring legacy of the prophetic tradition that has informed and challenged Judaism throughout the ages. Moreover, the role of the imaginal as a symbolic intermediary allowing for the imaging of the imageless God is rooted in biblical and Rabbinic texts, although it is developed and articulated most fully in the medieval mystical literature.

Central to all the major schools of Jewish

mysticism in the middle ages is the presumption regarding the representation of God as an anthropomorphic shape within the imagination of the mystic, primarily in the context of contemplative prayer. The recurring emphasis on the visualization of the divine anthropos in the texts of the German Pietists, the ecstatic and the theosophic kabbalists, indicates that in the Jewish mystical tradition the abstract object is rendered in concrete images in the contemplative vision. The visual encounter operative in the three trends of medieval Jewish mysticism attests to the convergence of anthropomorphism and theomorphism: God is imaged in human terms because the human is imaged in divine terms. In seeing God, one sees oneself, for in seeing oneself, one sees God. This, I assume, is the hermeneutical claim that lies at the phenomenological core of Jewish mysticism in all of its diverse manifestations.

Moreover, the experience of union, which, as noted, is so often designated the distinctive mark of mystical experience, is realized only to the extent that one cleaves to the form of God that one has visualized in one's imagination. From that vantage point, the imagination, which medieval mystical sources frequently locate in the heart, is the throne upon which the divine presence dwells. The critical aspect of intention in Jewish mystical literature, therefore, is not union with God *per se*, but the anthropomorphic representation and visual apprehension of God that ensues from the state of conjunction. To avoid potential misunderstanding, let me emphasize that I am not denying that unitive experiences were cultivated by medieval Jewish mystics, in some cases based on a Neoplatonic paradigm and in other cases betraying the influence of the Aristotelian model as it informed the mystical praxis of ecstatic kabbalah. My point is rather that these experiences of union served the ultimate goal of inducing mystical consciousness, which is the immediate and direct presence of God visually comprehended as an imaginal body. Unitive experience, therefore, must be contextualized in a broader phenomenological framework that concerns encountering the immediacy of the divine presence. One of the fundamental ways this is achieved in the Jewish mystical tradition is the visual contemplation of God's form in liturgical worship. Precisely this feature lies at the heart of the Rabbinic literature's conception of *kavvanah*—the intentionality required in prayer.[5]

Indeed, the praxis of *kavvanah* described in the various forms of kabbalistic speculation is predicated on the representation of the *sefirot*, understood either as the divine hypostases (in the theosophic kabbalah) or the luminous intellects that manifest the providential overflow of God (in the prophetic kabbalah), as an anthropomorphic shape within the imaginative faculty of the mystic. My understanding contrasts sharply with Scholem's characterization of meditation as it appears in kabbalistic literature from the middle of the thirteenth century as a contemplation by the intellect, whose objects are neither images nor visions, but nonsensual matters such as words, names, or thoughts.[6] No one could argue with the claim that the ultimate object of meditation in the main currents of the kabbalistic orientation consists of the *sefirot*, the spiritual entities that make up the divine pleroma. The important point, however, is that these entities, whatever their ontological status vis-à-vis the infinite Godhead, are phenomenally experienced only insofar as they are configured and instantiated in particular sentient forms within human consciousness. Contemplation of the linguistic structures mentioned by Scholem—words, names, and thoughts—is itself dependent on the imaginary visualization of these structures. One must, therefore, raise questions about Scholem's sweeping attempt to contrast the Christian and the kabbalistic doctrines of meditation on the grounds that in Christian mysticism there is centrally a pictorial and concrete subject, such as the suffering of Christ, that is given to the meditator, whereas in the kabbalah, the subject of contemplation is abstract and cannot be visualized, such as the tetragrammaton and its combinations.[7] The textual evidence from the major currents of the medieval Jewish mystical tradition indicates just the contrary: the divine names, and especially the tetragrammaton, serve as the object of contemplation

only to the degree that they assume morphic (and, in many instances, anthropomorphic) shape in the mind of the mystic. The mindfulness achieved by meditative ascent affirmed in kabbalistic texts is not a state of abstract emptiness, a peeling away of all material form from consciousness to attain the illumination of formless absorption as one finds, for instance, in Buddhist meditation.[8] Quite the opposite: contemplation eventuates in the polishing of the mind so that reflected in the mirror of the imagination is the concrete image of the divine anthropos.

Many sources could be cited to support my contention, but in this context I make reference to two examples from the sixteenth-century. The first is from Joseph Karo, who thus comments in his mystical diary:[9]

> If your thoughts cleave to Me constantly, nothing shall be lacking, and you shall be of those who stand before Me perpetually, for you should always imagine (*tesayyer*) in your soul that you are standing before Me and doing My service. . . . Therefore, you should take care to stand before Me constantly without any interruption, and your body and your limbs should be purified in the manner of Enoch, whose flesh became torches of fire and balls of flame.

To stand before God constantly, presented here as the essential datum of *devequt*—the experience of mystical communion—implies that one mentally forms an image of the divine presence in the shape of an anthropos. But to stand vis-à-vis God, to represent the glory visually, is predicated further on the ontological metamorphosis of the physical person into a spiritual being.[10] The paradigm of this transubstantiation is the figure of Enoch who, according to ancient Jewish tradition, was transformed from mortal flesh into the fiery essence of the angelic Metatron. Karo does not speak of the obliteration of the body but its purification. The image of fire as the means for the transfiguration of the carnal body into a psychic body recurs in Karo's writing, and it is often linked with the symbol of the sacrificial burnt-offering, such that the individual who undergoes this transformation is considered to be a sacrifice offered up to God.[11] The important point for our analysis is that the bodily vision of God's spirit is vouchsafed only to one whose own body has been spiritually transfigured.

The second illustration of my point is derived from Hayyim Vital, the preeminent disciple of Isaac Luria. The reappropriation of corporeal images as part of the mystical understanding of *kavvanah* is poignantly conveyed in a passage from the fourth part of Vital's *Sha'arei Qedushah*.[12] Vital characterizes the "secret of communion and the perfect intention" as a state in which one must constantly see oneself as "a soul without any body." One who attains this disembodiment, which is related by Vital to the spiritual exercise of *hitbodedut*, is able to draw upon himself the "holiness of the Holy Spirit" when he prays or recites psalms.[13] The pietistic path described by Vital actually involves five stages of attainment: the secret of conjunction (*hitdabbequt*), the secret of equanimity (*hishtavvut*), the secret of meditation (*hitbodedut*), the comprehension of the Holy Spirit (*ruah ha-qodesh*), and the experience of prophecy (*nevu'ah*).[14] One who has the requisite moral and religious virtues can embark upon this fivefold spiritual path that leads ultimately to prophecy, which is understood as the imaginative representation of the imageless God.

Consistent with other sixteenth-century kabbalists, who in turn based their views on older meditational tracts and manuals, Vital considers subjugation of the body (achieved through specific acts of asceticism) as the necessary precondition for the mystical experience of contemplation, described primarily as the visionary communion with the divine. To receive supernal illumination, the soul must be completely separated from the body, emptied of all material sensations and corporeal desires.[15] The point is stated explicitly in another passage:[16]

> The person must meditate in his thought (*yitboded be-mahshavto*) until the utmost limit, and he should separate his body from his soul as if he does not feel that he is garbed in matter at all, but he is entirely a soul. To the degree that he separates from matter his comprehension is augmented . . . if any corporeal thought comes to him, the thought of his soul ceases to be conjoined to the

> supernal entities and he does not comprehend anything, for the supernal holiness does not dwell on a person when he is attached to matter even [in the measure of] a hairsbreadth.

The ultimate secret of the prophetic experience is the imaginative representation of the divine as an anthropos. Only one who transforms the physical body into something spiritual—a process presented in the relevant texts as an angelification of the mystic—is capable of imaging the divine forms in bodily images.[17]

Annihilation of self, therefore, is a means for cleansing the imaginative faculty. Hence, immediately after Vital finishes the characterization of *hitbodedut* as the radical stripping away of all things corporeal, he cites a passage from the anonymous kabbalistic treatise, *Ma'arekhet ha-'Elohut*, which deals with the esoteric gnosis of the *Shi'ur Qomah*, a cluster of older texts that attribute explicit dimensions to the limbs of the creator, and the anthropomorphic nature implied by the scriptural account of prophetic visions.[18] The ultimate secret of the prophetic experience is the imaginative representation of the divine as an anthropos. The point is represented ideally in a remark of Judah Hayyat in his commentary to *Ma'arekhet ha-'Elohut*, which Vital himself cites in this context:[19]

> The lower anthropos is a throne for the supernal anthropos, for the physical limbs that are in him allude to the spiritual limbs above, which are the divine potencies, and not for naught does it say, "Let us make Adam in our image" (Gen. 1:26). Inasmuch as this image is the image of the spiritual, supernal anthropos, and the prophet is the physical man who, in the moment of prophecy, is almost transformed into a spiritual entity, and his external senses almost depart from him, thus he sees the image of an anthropos, just as he sees his image in a glass mirror.

The distinguishing feature of prophecy, according to Vital, is the conjunction of the soul to its ontological root in the realm of the *sefirot*, an experience predicated on the purification, rather than the nullification, of the body. Thus, Vital characterizes the "matter of prophecy" in the third part of *Sha'arei Qodesh* as follows:[20]

> When a person is in pure matter without any of the filth of the evil inclination and without any of the faculties of the elemental soul, and he has no sin that blemishes some root in the roots of his soul, and he prepares himself to be conjoined to his supernal root, then he can be conjoined to it. Even though he is worthy of this, he must remove his soul entirely and separate it from all corporeal matters, and then he can be conjoined to his spiritual root.

In another passage from this section of the text, Vital goes so far as to compare this separation to a simulated death: "He should close his eyes and separate his thought from all matters of this world as if his soul departed from him like one who has died who feels nothing at all."[21] This deathlike separation, however, does not entail the complete abrogation of corporeal images from prophetic vision, a wiping clean of the mirror of consciousness, as it were; on the contrary, as Vital goes on to describe at great length, a consequence of the soul's separation from the body is the imaginative ascent to the divine realm that culminates in the spiritual entities' assuming corporeal form within the imagination.[22]

The task that Vital here assigns to the prophet conforms to what he elsewhere defines as the more general task of the life of piety. The purpose of the conjunction of the soul and God, the rejoining of the part to the whole, is the spiritual vision of the divine accorded the soul.[23] This vision, once again, is depicted in terms of the ancient esoteric *Shi'ur Qomah*, i.e., the *sefirot* are configured as an anthropos in the human mind. The sinful soul is compared to a copper mirror so full of stains and rust that nothing can be seen in it; by contrast, the pure soul is like a clear and bright mirror in which the "supernal, holy things take shape."[24] That the visualization of the divine form is the ultimate goal of *devequt* and the true intent of *kavvanah* may be deduced from Vital's admonition to the reader that:[25]

> he should place the name [of God] before his eyes, as it is written, "I am ever mindful of the Lord's presence" (Ps. 16:8), and he should intend to conjoin his thought to it, and he should not cease even for a moment; this is the secret of "to cleave to

him" (Deut. 11:22), "and to him shall you cleave" (Deut. 10:20).

Kavvanah is predicated on a visual image of the letters of the tetragrammaton, in which are contained the ten *sefirot* that are configured in the shape of an anthropos. The experience of *devequt*, moreover, is realized only to the extent that one cleaves to the form of God that one has visualized in one's imagination. From that vantage point, the imagination—frequently designated, as we have said, as the heart—is the throne upon which the Shekhina dwells.[26]

The Body of the Text and the Text of the Body

Another assumption shared by the various trends of Jewish esotericism is that the luminous form of the glory visualized as the anthropomorphic shape upon the throne is simultaneously experienced in terms of the letters of the divine name (or names). The convergence of these two fields of symbolic discourse is attested in the *Shi'ur Qomah* fragments, which provide a detailed account of the stature of the body of the creator both in terms of extraordinary measurements and seemingly unintelligible names. It is plausible that these were originally two distinct strands of tradition that were blended together at a particular stage in the redactional process. The essential point, however, is that the text was received in such a way that it was presumed that the two strands belonged together, and hence what is most corporeal is the literal. The body is the name, and the name is the body.

The convergence of these two symbolic modes had a major impact on the medieval kabbalistic literature. In the theosophic tradition, the potencies of the Godhead, the ten *sefirot*, are visually configured in the shape of an anthropos, but the limbs of that body are composed ultimately of the letters of the divine names associated with each of those potencies, which are all derived from the one name, the tetragrammaton. Indeed, the position affirmed generally by kabbalists of a theosophic orientation is that the ultimate nature of corporeality is related to the linguistic structure that underlies the material substratum. The point is underscored in the following remark of the eighteenth-century Rabbinic figure Jonathan Eybeschuetz, who noted that the kabbalists "received from the prophets who saw the camp of God, and they saw that [the divine matters] are all letters, which are described as a very bright and resplendent light."[27]

Encapsulated in this succinct remark are the two main fields of symbolic discourse employed by kabbalists in the attempt to depict the nature of the divine reality, light and language. For many kabbalists, the two fields are related to the thirty-two paths of wisdom mentioned in *Sefer Yesirah*, which comprise the ten *sefirot* and the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet. But the word *sefirot* itself is sufficient to convey this dual sense, because that word apparently derives from the root *SFR*, which can be vocalized as *sefer*, book, but is also associated with the word *sappir*, a sapphire. Additionally, the root *SFR* can be vocalized as *safar*, to count. No single English word can adequately account for the richness of the range of semantic meaning linked to the term *sefirot*, which denotes concurrently the sense of luminosity (*sappir*), speech (*sefer*), and enumeration (*safar*). At the heart of the mystical experience that informs the world of the kabbalists is the convergence of these three fields of discourse: the potencies of the divine are experienced as the translucent letters that are enumerated within the book written by God.

The kabbalists' preponderant utilization of anthropomorphic imagery to depict the divine is predicated on the presumption that the Hebrew letters assigned to each of the relevant limbs constitute the reality of the body on both the human and the divine planes of being.[28] For the kabbalists, therefore, the use of human terms to speak about matters divine is not simply understood in the philosophical manner as an approximate way to speak of God, a concession to the inevitable limitations of embodied human beings who desire to speak of that which is disembodied. On the contrary, the examples of anthropomorphism in the canonical texts of Scripture indicate that the nature of human corporeality can only be understood

in light of the divine corporeality, which is constituted ultimately by the letters of the name. The point is expressed succinctly by Joseph Gikatilla, a Spanish kabbalist who was active at the time of the composition of the Zohar in the late-thirteenth and early-fourteenth centuries: "The intention of the forms of the limbs that are in us is that they are made in the image of signs (*be-dimyon simmanim*), the hidden, supernal matters that the mind cannot know except in the manner of signification (*ke-dimyon zikkaron*)."[29]

In line with Maimonides, Gikatilla rejects the possibility of interpreting biblical anthropomorphisms in a literal sense, since God does not have a physical body. On the other hand, he differs from Maimonides to the degree that he does not deny that there is an ontological reality to the divine that can only be conveyed in anthropomorphic terms. What is unique to the kabbalistic perspective articulated by Gikatilla is that the limbs of the physical body signify the limbs of the spiritual body, for the reality of the former, much like that of the latter, is constituted by the letters that make up the corporeal matter. The kabbalists express this idea as well by their repeated claim that the Torah in its mystical essence is the name of God, which is identical with the body of the divine.[30] In contrast to the Christological doctrine of the incarnation of the word in the flesh of Jesus, the Jewish esoteric tradition is based on the notion of the body as text and the text as body rather than the identification of a particular historical figure as the embodiment of the divine teaching. In the final analysis, the image of the Torah as an anthropos is an imaginal symbol, for only in the eye of the imagination does the scroll of the Torah assume the shape of a human form, which is of course identified as the ideal Israel.

The convergence of bodily and linguistic symbolism is also a central component of the kabbalistic teaching of the ecstatic-prophetic school espoused particularly by the thirteenth-century mystic, Abraham Abulafia. For Abulafia, not only is the esoteric wisdom of the divine chariot brought about by knowledge of the various combinations and permutations of the names of God, but vision of the chariot itself consists of the very letters that are constitutive elements of the names.[31] The ecstatic vision of the letters is not simply the means to achieve union with God; it is, to an extent, the end of the process. The culminating stage in the *via mystica* is a vision of the letters of the divine names, especially the tetragrammaton, originating in the intellectual and imaginative powers. These letters are visualized simultaneously as an anthropos. Gazing upon the divine name, therefore, is akin to beholding the divine form as constituted within one's imagination. This vision results from the conjunction of the human intellect with the divine, but, like all prophecy, follow-ing the view of Maimonides and his Islamic predecessors, there must be an imaginative component. The latter is described either as the form of the letters or that of an anthropos. Both of these constitute a figurative depiction of the Active Intellect, personified as Metatron, who is also identified as the scroll of the Torah in its mystical essence.[32]

Conclusion

This presentation of some of the main elements that have shaped the contours of the mystical phenomenon in the religious history of Judaism can be broadly defined as morphological in nature, to be distinguished from the typological orientation that has been utilized by scholars since the nineteenth century. The typologies are helpful, but they ultimately fail to capture the complex relationship between the various trends that have been expressed in the thoughts and practices of the different mystics. Thus, for example, the distinction between magic and mysticism is very problematic, insofar as magical texts often embrace components of the mystical tradition, and the mystical texts, components of the magical tradition. In the abstract, one may certainly draw the line between mysticism and magic, but it is very difficult in concrete examples culled from the primary sources of either phenomenon to maintain a clear and well-defined distinction. The centrality of the power of the divine and angelic names in both mystical and magical sources illustrates

the blurring of the line that separates these two pursuits.

Similarly, with respect to the typological distinction between ecstatic and theosophic kabbalah, the line separating the two is not always apparent.[33] Thus, the theosophic traditions expressed in medieval kabbalistic sources are often enough related to the cultivation of visionary and contemplative experiences that lead to ecstasy, whereas the ecstatic kabbalah embraces a meditational practice that is itself rooted in an ontology that presupposes a theosophic understanding of the divine nature. What is stated by theosophic and ecstatic kabbalists is the emphasis on the knowledge of the name, which is the defining feature of the occult wisdom of the kabbalah. Moreover, for both ecstatic and theosophic kabbalists, knowledge of the name occasions the experience of *devequt*, conjunction with the divine that may be experienced as communion or even union of the soul and God. According to the kabbalists, the ultimate purpose of the religious life is for one to attain this state of conjunction, which in the last analysis is an expression of self-realization. The deeper self that the kabbalist comes to be through knowledge of the divine is at the same time the true essence of the world. Although the Jewish mystics have tried to preserve the distinction between God, self, and world, it is not entirely clear that they have succeeded, for in the blaze of the mystical vision, all reality becomes one. To see God, therefore, is to see oneself reflected in the mirror of the text of the world.

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NOTES

[1] N.O. Brown, *Apocalypse and/or Metamorphosis* (Berkeley, 1991), p. 3.

[2] See, in particular, E.R. Wolfson, *Through a Speculum that Shines: Vision and Imagination in Medieval Jewish Mysticism* (Princeton, 1994).

[3] Ibid., pp. 98–105.

[4] *Zohar 'im Perush 'Or Yaqar*, 17 (Jerusalem, 1989), p. 11.

[5] Elliot R. Wolfson, "Iconic Visualization and the Imaginal Body of God: The Role of Intention in the Rabbinic Conception of Prayer," in *Modern Theology* 12 (1996): 137–162.

[6] *Kabbalah* (Jerusalem, 1974), p. 369. See also Scholem's characterization in "The Concept of Kavvanah in the Early Kabbalah," in A. Jospe, ed., *Studies in Jewish Thought: An Anthology of German Jewish Scholarship* (Detroit, 1981), pp. 162–180; idem, *Origins of the Kabbalah*, R.J. Zwi Werblowsky, ed. (Princeton, 1987), pp. 195–196, 243–244, 414–419; idem, *The Messianic Idea in Judaism* (New York, 1971), pp. 217–218.

[7] *Kabbalah*, p. 371.

[8] See S.W. Laycock, *Mind as Mirror and the Mirroring of Mind: Buddhist Reflections on Western Phenomenology* (Albany, 1994), pp. 76–78. For an approach to Jewish mystical texts more congenial to the model I have rejected, see D. Matt, "Ayin: The Concept of Nothingness in Jewish Mysticism," in R.K.C. Forman, ed., *The Problem of Pure Consciousness: Mysticism and Philosophy* (New York, 1990), pp. 121–159, now reprinted with slight modifications in L. Fine, ed., *Essential Papers on Kabbalah* (New York, 1995), pp. 67–108. While apophatic statements appear in Jewish mystical literature, I would argue that the encounter with the divine nothing is an experience of God's presence as absence rather than an experience of the absence of God's presence. See my "Negative Theology and Positive Assertion in the Early Kabbalah," in *Da'at* 32–33 (1994), pp. v–xxii. A similar argument has been made by Bernard McGinn for the negative or apophatic mystics in the history of Western Christianity. See his *The Foundations of Mysticism: Origins to the Fifth Century* (New York, 1991), pp. xvii–xix and *The Growth of Mysticism: Gregory the Great Through the 12th Century* (New York, 1994), pp. x–xi.

[9] *Maggid Mesharim* (Petah Tiqvah, 1990), pp. 149–150. On the role of *kavvanah* and the experience of *devequt* in Karo's thought, see R.J. Zwi Werblowsky, *Joseph Karo: Lawyer and Mystic* (Philadelphia, 1977), pp. 162–163; M. Pachter, "The Concept of Devekut in the Homiletical Ethical Writings of 16th Century Safed," in I. Twersky, ed., *Studies in Medieval Jewish History and Literature*, vol. 2 (Cambridge, 1984), pp. 193–209.

[10] In *Maggid Mesharim*, p. 37, Karo relates the spiritualizing transformation through ascent to martyrdom, symbolized primarily in terms of sacrificial imagery. On the symbolic correlation of death and *devequt*, cf. *Maggid Mesharim*, p. 139. See Werblowsky, *Joseph Karo*, pp. 153–154; Pachter, "Concept of Devekut," pp. 199–202. The nexus of *kavvanah*, visual apprehension of the

Shekhina, and the eradication of the bodily sense, is already implied in earlier kabbalistic sources, such as the passage from David ben Judah he-Hasid translated and discussed by Scholem, "Concept of Kavvanah," p. 169.

[11] See Pachter, "Concept of Devekut," pp. 200–201.

[12] For a description of this part of *Sha'arei Qedushah*, including a list of Vital's major sources, see L. Fine, "Recitation of Mishnah as a Vehicle for Mystical Inspiration: A Contemplative Technique Taught by Hayyim Vital," in *Revue des Études Juives* 141 (1982), pp. 188–189. The mystical techniques recommended by Vital to attain a contemplative state of communion, consisting mainly of unifications (*yihudim*), conjurations (*hashba'ot*), and adjurations by divine or angelic names (*hazkarot ha-shemot*), are discussed by Werblowsky, *Joseph Karo*, pp. 71–83. See also Pachter, "Concept of Devekut," pp. 225–229; L. Fine, "Maggidic Revelation in the Teachings of Isaac Luria," in J. Reinharz and D. Swetschinski, eds., *Mystics, Philosophers and Politicians* (Durham, 1982), pp. 141–157; idem, "The Contemplative Practice of Yihudim in Lurianic Kabbalah," in A. Green, ed., *Jewish Spirituality From the Sixteenth-Century Revival to the Present* (New York, 1987), pp. 64–98.

[13] *Sha'arei Qedushah*, IV.2, in *Ketavim Hadashim le-Rabbenu Hayyim Vital* (Jerusalem, 1988), p. 10.

[14] Ibid., p. 9.

[15] On the role of asceticism in kabbalistic pietism, especially in sixteenth-century texts, see Werblowsky, *Joseph Karo*, pp. 38–83, 113–118, 149–152, 161–165; Pachter, "Concept of Devekut," pp. 200–210; L. Fine, "Purifying the Body in the Name of the Soul: The Problem of the Body in Sixteenth-Century Kabbalah," in *People of the Body: Jews and Judaism from an Embodied Perspective*, pp. 117–142. For a discussion of the ascetic tendencies in earlier kabbalah, see B. Safran, "Rabbi Azriel and Nahmanides: Two Views of the Fall of Man," in I. Twersky, ed., *Rabbi Moses Nahmanides (Ramban): Explorations in His Religious and Literary Virtuosity* (Cambridge, 1983), pp. 75–106; E.R. Wolfson, "Eunuchs Who Keep the Sabbath: Becoming Male and the Ascetic Ideal in Thirteenth-Century Jewish Mysticism," in J.J. Cohen and B. Wheeler, eds., *Becoming Male in the Middle Ages* (New York, 1997), pp. 151–185.

[16] *Sha'arei Qedushah*, IV.2, in *Ketavim Hadashim le-Rabbenu Hayyim Vital*, p. 5.

[17] Consider the following passage in the anonymous kabbalistic treatise *Sullam ha-'Aliyyah*, ed. J.E. Parush (Jerusalem, 1989), p. 73: "All this is in order to separate the soul and to purify it from all the physical forms and entities. . . . And when it is in this condition, he will prepare his true thought to form in his heart and in his intellect as if he were sitting above in the heaven of heavens before the Holy One, blessed be he, and in the midst of the splendor, the effulgence, and the majesty of his *Shekhinah*, and it is as if he were to see the Holy One, blessed be he, sitting like a high and exalted king."

[18] *Ma'arekhet ha-'Elohut* (Jerusalem, 1963), ch. 10, 142b-144b; for discussion of this passage, see Wolfson, *Through a Speculum that Shines*, p. 325.

[19] *Sha'arei Qedushah*, IV.2, in *Ketavim Hadashim le-Rabbenu Hayyim Vital*, p. 12, citing *Ma'arekhet ha-'Elohut*, 143a.

[20] *Sha'arei Qedushah*, III.5, p. 89.

[21] Ibid., III.8, p. 101.

[22] *Sha'arei Qedushah*, III.5, pp. 89–90; and see analysis of this passage in Wolfson, *Through a Speculum that Shines*, pp. 320–323. See also Werblowsky, *Joseph Karo*, pp. 65–71; E.R. Wolfson, "Weeping, Death, and Spiritual Ascent in Sixteenth-Century Jewish Mysticism," in *Death, Ecstasy, and Other Worldly Journeys*, pp. 209–247. On the description of *devequt* as an ecstatic separation of the soul from the body and its consequent restoration to the divine, cf. *Sha'arei Qedushah*, III.2., pp. 80 and 84.

[23] See, by contrast, the characterization of *kavvanah* in sixteenth-century Lurianic material given by Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* (New York, 1956), pp. 276–278. Scholem emphasizes that, for the Lurianic kabbalists, *kavvanah*, which involves concentrating on the mystical meaning associated with each word, is the way that leads to *devequt*, the kabbalistic equivalent of *unio mystica*. True to fashion, however, he does not mention the visionary quality of the experience.

[24] *'Olat Tamid* (Jerusalem, 1907), 46a-b. This passage appears in some editions of *Sha'ar Ruah ha-Qodesh*, for example the version of this text published in *Kitvei Rabbenu ha-'Ari* (Jerusalem, 1963), 11:39. For discussion, see Wolfson, *Through a Speculum that Shines*, pp. 323–324, and Fine, "Purifying the Body," pp. 131–132. Cf., *Sha'arei Qedushah*, IV.2, in *Ketavim Hadashim le-Rabbenu Hayyim Vital*, p. 15.

[25] *Sha'arei Qedushah*, III.4, pp. 87–88.

[26] This aspect of *devequt* in the writings of Jewish mystics was duly noted by Werblowsky, *Joseph Karo*, pp. 58–59. Interestingly, Werblowsky suggests that the idea expressed by kabbalists that the mystic's heart is the true dwelling of God may betray the influence of Sufism. For a more recent study of this possibility, see P. Fenton, "La 'Hitbodedut' chez les premiers Qabbalists en Orient et chez les Soufis," in R. Goetschel, ed., *Prière, mystique et Judaïsme* (Paris, 1987), pp. 133–157, and idem, "The Influences of Sufism on the Kabbalah in Safed," *Mahanayyim* 6 (1993), pp. 170–179 (in Hebrew).

[27] *Shem 'Olam*, A. Jellinek, ed. (Vienna, 1891), p. 11.

[28] See E.R. Wolfson, "Anthropomorphic Imagery and Letter Symbolism in the Zohar," in *Jerusalem Studies in Jewish Thought* 8 (1989), pp. 147–181 (in Hebrew).

[29] *Sha'arei 'Orah*, J. Ben-Shlomo, ed. (Jerusalem, 1981), 1:49.

[30] See G. Scholem, *On the Kabbalah and Its Symbolism* (New York, 1969), pp. 32–86.

[31] See M. Idel, *The Mystical Experience in Abraham Abulafia* (Albany, 1988), pp. 95–100.

[32] See Scholem, *Major Trends*, p. 141; M. Idel, *Language, Torah, and Hermeneutics in Abraham Abulafia* (Albany, 1989), pp. 35–38, 77–79, and 163 n. 33.

[33] For fuller discussion of this issue, see E.R. Wolfson, "The Doctrine of Sefirot in the Prophetic Kabbalah of Abraham Abulafia," in *Jewish Studies Quarterly* 2 (1995), pp. 336–371 and 3 (1996), pp. 47–84; idem, "Mystical Rationalization of the Commandments in the Prophetic Kabbalah of Abraham Abulafia," in A. Ivry, A. Arkush, and E.R. Wolfson, eds., *Perspectives on Jewish Thought and Mysticism* (Reading, 1997), pp. 311–360.

Mythology, Judaism and

The renowned historian of religion and student of religious myth, Mircea Eliade, commented that the term "myth" as used today has become "somewhat equivocal." In ordinary usage the term means a false idea, a story that lacks truth. By contrast, as used by "ethnologists, sociologists, and historians of religions" the term indicates a "sacred" story, a narrative that serves as an "exemplary model." The two definitions conflict. While the second emphasizes myth's positive characteristics, the first is pejorative, holding that myth lacks the rigor of science, reflects superstition and naive belief, and has no place in modern life. Eliade traces this conflict from ancient through the modern times,[1] himself defending myth and arguing for its supreme value within all human culture. According to Eliade, the function of myth is "to reveal models and, in so doing, to give a meaning to the World (sic) and to human life."[2] Such models, he says, are indispensable for all human existence.

Another view recently has become popular. Myth, as understood today, takes its meaning from its original Greek sense of "story." To call something a myth is to denote not its significance, truth, or accuracy, but its form, content, and purpose. Since, in this view, myth is a literary form, a type of narrative, linguistic analysis holds the key to its meaning, purpose, and value. Accordingly, structuralists like Claude Levi-Strauss[3] look to the form of a narrative to determine whether it is myth. They see myth as a type of language, a linguistic trop, in which mythic symbols work as a vocabulary. On the most obvious level, this means that, rather than speaking directly about sexuality and conflict, stories will use erotic symbols, such as serpents and apples. On a more complex level, motifs such as rescue from danger, ascent to heaven, and descent to the nether world develop particular meanings within the literary system.

This approach to myth holds that audiences learn to interpret mythic symbols, recognizing the significance of a tale concerning the "one forbidden thing," whether what is forbidden is opening a certain door, eating a certain food, or looking at a person's face. When more than one such motif occurs, there will be a "grammar" that determines their arrangement. Thus, whether an exile or a quest follows the breaking of the forbidden thing may have important significance beyond the specific details of the particular story.[4]

Even when viewed as a kind of language, myth can be interpreted positively or negatively. It may be seen as providing a structure and framework for meaning, so as to reinforce the status quo; or it can be used as the occasion for ever-new meanings, an opportunity to challenge accepted traditions. In evaluating this dichotomy, Umberto Eco contrasts the ancient and medieval understanding of myth with the modern view. He thinks that earlier approaches used myth as a way to *limit* the unfettered imagination. By drawing mythic pictures, authors established a framework for thinking. In this setting, myth did not encourage reckless speculation, because it provided a concrete image against which thinkers had to measure their words. Like philosophy, myth thus was a way of controlling the tendency for people to follow their most whimsical thoughts, what Eco calls "the exaggerated fecundity of symbols." By contrast to this approach, Eco opposes what he sees as the recent use of myth as a license to imagine whatever the thinker wishes. Myth, that is, has come to offer an excuse to generate

ever more outrageous models of reality. Eco laments that a thinker today "no longer recognizes the discipline that myths impose on the symbols they involve."[5]

The following presentation of Jewish myth uses the model of language and avoids the temptation to evaluate myth as either a positive or negative force in human life. We take myth to be a certain formal genre—that of a story. But while every text discussed here shares this narrative characteristic, it must be understood that not all stories count as myths. A second characteristic that defines myth is function. In general, we understand narratives as mythic when they provide models for human behavior, human society, or human perception of reality. Scholars however debate the specifics. Some claim that myth conveys a view of the world, an image of the cosmos. Others discover in myth psychological paradigms that allow people to cope with their inner conflicts. A related approach interprets mythic function as sociological or political. Finally some identify an imaginative function of myth, evoking and provoking human creativity. A final characteristic of myth lies in its content, the message that the texts transmit. The language of myth not only functions in specific ways but uses a specific set of ideas to achieve its goals. That complex of concepts creates the content of a particular mythology.

History and Myth

Since the nineteenth century, this variety of approaches to myth has influenced the way Jewish scholars investigate the relationship of mythology and Judaism. Indeed, Jews who study myth today debate its significance by offering the same array of positive and negative evaluations as are found among students of myth generally.[6] Most modern scholars of Judaism, for instance, deem the story of creation in Genesis 1:1–2:4 either to be a "myth" or to preserve mythic elements. By this they do not mean that it is a fiction or that its science is inaccurate. Even evolution, most students of religion aver, presents a mythic view of the universe. The creation story qualifies as myth because it tells a story designed to provide a model of reality, to point to the ordered and designed quality of the world in which we live.

Many Jewish scholars hail what they see as this mythic aspect of the story. It shows, they say, that Jews created a viable paradigm of reality that continues even today to influence the way people think. Other scholars disagree, seeing "myth" in general as a primitive way of regarding the world. These scholars privilege non-mythic models of reality and argue that the Genesis story itself is the first example of exactly such a non-mythic depiction. In this view, any mythic elements of the creation story have been transformed in the book of Genesis from narrative into objective descriptions of the observed world. The story therefore is not to be interpreted as "myth" at all. While members of each group agree that myth means something other than "fiction," or "inaccurate science," they disagree in their definitions of myth. Examining those who see Jewish myth negatively and those who see it positively reveals the variety of definitions held by scholars of Jewish mythology today.

The biblical scholar Yehezkel Kaufmann exemplifies the approach of those who deny that biblical accounts rightly are deemed mythological. He considers the central contribution of monotheism to human culture to be its depiction of a world unified by the grand design of its single maker. Whereas polytheism's mythic stories offered several competing models of reality, monotheism, Kaufmann argues, initiated a scientific mode of thinking. Polytheists required myth because they lacked the basis for a predictable, ordered exploration of the empirical world. They relied on suggestive mythic pictures because the multitude of divinities left them at the mercy of arbitrary and contradictory supernatural forces. Jewish monotheism, in contrast, leaves no room for mythic narratives, because it regards all reality as evidence for a single, understandable pattern. Observation, historical progress, and human development replace myth as a means for comprehending the world. While Kaufmann acknowledges that elements in the Hebrew Bible draw on stories from ancient

polytheistic myth, he insists that the author of the biblical narratives transformed pagan motifs into a view of reality based on science and history. Myth, understood this way, opposes history and science; its exemplary models represent a now outmoded way of comprehending the cosmos.[7]

Another scholar, Henri Frankfort, advances a similar critique of myth. Frankfort posits two spheres in which human beings create "reality:" that of history and that of ritual. The Bible, according to him, propels human beings to act in the world around them, to change reality, to progress to higher stages of existence. Myth, on the other hand, points backward to eternal time, to a world that exists beside and beyond our current existence. Myth invokes ritual as the sphere in which people make the most difference. By acting in ritual prayer, song, and drama, people recreate and thus recapture an ideal reality of which they have lost sight. Mythic thinking detracts from history not because it provides unscientific models of the world, but because it elevates cultic action over historical deeds. It yearns for a return to primal perfection rather than an advance to a future utopia.[8]

Both Kaufmann and Frankfort argue that myth substitutes for history. This theory meets opposition from many biblical scholars who deny that the Bible anticipates modern intellectual approaches. Some argue that the historical veneer in biblical narratives cannot disguise the basic mythic elements that are present.[9] The reliance on miracles and folk lore within the biblical narratives suggests to such readers that the Bible has hardly gone far beyond the pagan materials it incorporates. They claim therefore that the Bible more accurately is interpreted within the context of ancient pre-scientific and pre-historical thinking than as a proto-modern breakthrough. Other thinkers refuse to choose between myth and history, describing the Bible instead as encompassing both categories within a unique type of writing called "epic."[10] This strategy, however, only deflects the discussion slightly. The question remains what should one do with a content that seems equally historical and non-historical.

Martin Buber offers a positive interpretation of myth by suggesting that the category "history" itself be reconsidered. History, for Buber, provides the context within which the human meeting with others occurs. The external "historical" events, which people chronicle, merely offer a backdrop for the "I-thou" encounter, the face-to-face embrace of one "self " with another. This perspective enables Buber to defend myth within Judaism, and, indeed, he examined the entire range of Jewish mythology within his unique I-Thou perspective.[11] His writings on the Bible analyze its texts to discover their potential for stimulating I-Thou meeting. In this account, myth represents a type of language that requires recitation for vitalization. When the written word becomes an enacted sound, creating a "speech-act," language gains vitality. Buber believes that such recitation, such speaking, acts creatively. It evokes a special dimension of being that, while as palpably real as ordinary experience, nevertheless enables people to move beyond ordinary limitations. Myth, for Buber, acts like a special language, a set of words that, when spoken, change existence. To speak, in this sense, is to perform an action. Myth, therefore, consists of language used to accomplish a deed, of "speech-acts" that create a sense of intimacy and connection to God. For Kaufmann and Frankfort, myth serves a pseudo-historical function; for Buber, it prepares the way for the only authentic history possible.

An approach similar to Buber's not only sees myth as conveying the true historical message, but elevates it above so-called "modern" historical approaches. Myth, on this view, represents an alternative to logical reasoning and history, but not a rival to it. It amplifies the human relationship to the cosmos. Science, history, and logic help humanity make use of the world in which they live. Myth, in this claim, teaches people how to relate immediately to the world and its creator.[12] This type of relation seems to exemplify what Buber meant by the "I-Thou" encounter. It moves beyond objective history to the history of the living subject, of the person, in relationship to another self. Myth, on this reading, opens

the way to an unmediated meeting with the other, a meeting more difficult to achieve through texts of either science or history. While Henri Frankfort criticized pre-biblical thought as mythic because it stimulates ritual action rather than historical deeds, John L. McKenzie celebrates the ability of myth to reveal a meaning that transcends the mundane events that make up historical experience.

Another approach regards myth as a type of non-historical narrative that contains within it evidence about the history of its makers. Jonathan Z. Smith, for example, identifies the function of myth as primarily historical. Through a functionalist approach, he uncovers the "history in myth." Myth functions, on his reading, as a reflection and repository of evidence concerning a group's past.[13] The question for Smith is not whether or not the Bible thought it was writing history. Historians do not often realize the mythic aspects of what they write, and myth makers do not often recognize the history within their myths. In both cases the "function" of historical or mythic writing is more a matter of the reader's perception than of the author's intent.

Some thinkers, like Mircea Eliade, go beyond identifying a positive historical function in myth. They claim that myth offers a unique contribution to human existence that no other human phenomenon, whether historical or psychological, can fulfill. Only through myth, they claim, do people discover the transcendent realm of the eternal that surpasses historical time (see Eliade, ibid.). Elie Wiesel similarly finds in myth a vehicle for conveying a moral orientation to the world that historical narrative lacks. Without myth, history lapses into a record of one event after another. With myth, history takes on moral significance; it becomes a series of choices that define the moral stature of human beings.[14] Here the function of myth cannot be replaced by history or philosophy, although the content of myth may use both of these as its building blocks.

Whether contending against myth, championing its cause, or arguing for its moral relevance, these thinkers analyze the truth claims that myth advances. Those who oppose myth think that its claims refer to the same data as those of science and history, with myth providing only imprecise and impressionistic images of that data. Whether due to the influence of polytheism or to a pre-scientific attitude toward nature, this mythic imprecision renders it a poor anticipation of true history. Another view, however, sees myth as a realm of being parallel to but not identical with that of empirical studies. Whether identified with Buber's "I-Thou" meeting or with some moral dimension, myth points to a reality that history cannot comprehend.

We shall see below that some Jewish myths do indeed seem to overlap with empirical history, while other mythic texts point beyond that sphere—some to morality and others to a different theological realm. Contemporary students of Jewish myth accordingly need not limit mythic texts to a single truth claim. Instead they may posit the various possible claims evoked by a particular story, and in so doing explore a variety of ways of construing the meaning of that text.

Social, Political, and Psychological Functions of Myth

Myth may function as an alternative to history, acting within the political or sociological sphere to provide a unifying ideology or social consensus, articulating a particular group's highest values and aspirations. In this function, political myth serves several purposes. It can stabilize a society by reinforcing existing views of leadership and civil order. It can also destabilize the social norms by introducing new paradigms and models of politics. Often one mythic image may perform both purposes, providing stability in a time of crisis precisely by challenging the accepted image of the world order. Many Jewish texts may be deemed mythic precisely because of their political function.[15]

Mythic texts also function psychologically. Some regard this function as dangerous and primitive, deriving from an immature period in the evolution of human thought, which must be replaced by more mature thinking.

In this case, however, psychological maturity rather than science and history replace outmoded myth. Rene Girard argues this case with persuasive passion,[16] seeing myth as fulfilling a psychological and sociological function of justifying violence. Though mythology, he argues, a society projects its violence outward onto a scapegoat. For instance, myths of the Greek god Zeus and of the Scandinavian Baldr exonerate their heroes from charges of mass murder.

Girard argues that through such myth a people learns to accept its own violence as necessary and even virtuous. The Bible, in contrast, recognizes the violence that its "heroes" perpetrate but *criticizes* it. Just as the Roman myth of the building of Rome depends upon the fratricide of its twin founders, so in the Bible civilization begins with Cain's fratricidal murder of Abel. Yet the Bible refuses to exonerate Cain and consistently reveals the perils of violence and its inevitable destruction of human society. For Girard this willingness to face up to violence and offer no excuses for it indicates an abandonment of myth. While for Girard both mythic and non-mythic stories offer exemplary models of human behavior, they differ on the basis of content. Myth disguises violence and hides it under good intentions; the Bible, by rejecting myth, takes an honest look at the violent human psyche. For Girard such honesty represents a mature approach, while myth is symptomatic of an immature unwillingness to face facts.

Psychologists, however, do not invariably take a negative view of myth and its functions. The psychological study of myth, begun by such pioneers as Freud and Jung, often reflects the tension already found in theorists of myth generally; some evaluate it positively and some negatively (see Segal, ibid., pp. 11–17). Erich Fromm exemplifies a positive approach to biblical and Jewish myth, claiming that while some myths reinforce immature psychological responses to reality, others aid mature development. He hails Jewish myth for serving the latter function.[17] Beyond simply defending myth, some scholars condemn cultures defined by "amythia," that is, the rejection of myth. They argue that such a rejection deprives people of the tools provided by the unconscious for self-discovery. On this reading, people living in a society cursed with amythia remain blind to their inner nature, unable to cope with the buried truths hidden in their psyches.[18] Judaism, or at least its myths, offers Jews an opportunity to gain insight into their dilemmas and problems. Jewish myth functions therapeutically as a useful tool as modern Jews seek to understand hidden personality traits.

We shall illustrate below that Jewish myth functions in diverse ways and cannot be limited to a single purpose, whether sociological, political, or psychological. These stories sometimes unite a society and sometimes fragment it. They sometimes enable people to confront the darker parts of their personality and at other times allow them to find a refuge from their deepest fears. A careful student of myth avoids branding one social consequence of myth "functional" and another "dysfunctional" or labeling one psychological result of myth "mature" and another "immature." The scholarly task must be to discover both the psychological and sociological repercussions of myth and to allow readers to draw their own conclusions. The variety of mythic types parallels the variety of human needs and should be understood within the context of human diversity.

Imagination and Modern Myth

Myth in the modern world seems distinctly different from traditional mythology. Contemporary life proliferates models of reality that could well bear the title "myth." As Roland Barthes, who defines myth as any language that refers to reality rather than seeking to create it, suggests, the ordinary perceptions ingrained into the social fabric provide the myths by which people live. Myth, he thus argues, reproduces reality without seeking to create something new. He offers as examples of myth the latest cinematic icon, popular styles in dress, and commercial advertising.[19]

Modern Jewish writing reflects exactly such an influence of myth. Movements like

Reform Judaism, Zionism, and Yiddishism create mythic images to legitimate their new and distinctive constructions of Judaism. Indeed, myth seems particularly prominent in Jewish political ideology today. Yet some thinkers complain that seeing a use of myth in these political contexts has transformed what had always been defined as a religious phenomenon into an "ordinary" one. Calling Zionism a myth, that is, cheapens the term, insofar as, in service to an ideology, mythic narratives fails to perform the creative function of "true" myth. They hold, by contrast, that myth is always a positive force, *creating* a view of reality and initiating a believer into it. If modern myth reduces this power of creativity to political expediency, then it has forfeited its most important function.[20]

Political myth, however, is only one form of modern Jewish mythology. Jewish myth often acts as a catalyst for the imagination. Reading Jewish myth, contemporary Jews may glimpse new ways of conceiving of themselves and their tradition. Modern Jews, for instance, have explored the mystical tradition exposed by Gershom Scholem and have found in its depths resources for reinventing what it means to be a Jew. The sexual references, the plethora of symbols, and the mythic narratives appeal to them as an alternative to secular society. Other modern Jews, however, criticize this fascination with the fantastic and mythic. Both Walter Benjamin and Franz Rosenzweig emphasized the ethical rather than the mythic. Duty and task, understanding history and working to redeem it, became central to their vision of a renewed Judaism. Jewish renewal sometimes espouses the mythic as a source of strength and sometimes rejects it as a diversion from moral matters.[21]

The choice between renewal through myth or renewal through ethics may be too stark. Emmanuel Levinas, for example, agrees with Rosenzweig's emphasis on ethics. Nevertheless, he finds a use for Jewish myth. Myth offers an opportunity for reflection; it challenges Jews to "demythologize" its meaning—to interpret its symbolism. Levinas asserts that no single demythologization is ever final. Indeed, he says, Jewish creativity depends on demythologizing ancient texts. The problem, according to Levinas, comes only when myth takes itself too literally. He celebrates Jewish tradition as a "demythologizing of what was already demythologized, a quest for meaning to be renewed."[22] This view looks at myth as an irritant ready to be converted into a pearl. Levinas does not oppose myth as the point of departure for new and rational interpretations, for what he calls demythologization. But when Jews refuse to defuse myth, when they celebrate its imaginative function, then he thinks they have moved beyond the essential teachings of Judaism.[23] The correct use of myth breeds a greater sense of ethical responsibility and moral awareness, not a lessened one.

Levinas' approach intimates a way of reading Jewish myth that mediates between those who view it negatively and those who interpret it positively. Whether myth contributes positively to modern Judaism or whether it undermines it, mythic elements do indeed intrude in Judaic religion today. The survey that below devotes attention to modern Jewish myth-makers without suggesting an evaluation of their effect on Jewish religion. Clearly modern Jewish myths differ from previous Jewish mythology. The decision as to whether that novelty strengthens or weakens the tradition does not lie with students of mythology. Thus we sketch the variety of modern myths as testimony to the continuing power of myth-making within Jewish religious life.

Content of Jewish Myth

Jewish myths, defined structurally as Jewish narratives and functionally as the use of these narratives to convey a world view, to accomplish social, political, and psychological goals, and to stimulate imagination, exhibit certain common characteristics. The content of Jewish mythology, that is, unites it through different centuries and transcends the uses to which it has been put. While each period yields specific myths formed out of the historical and literary material of that period, other myths remain constant throughout Judaism's historical development.

All of these myths fall into three broad categories: the cosmological, the anthropological, and the political.

The cosmological myth describes the creation of the world and evokes a sense of the reality existing outside of human activity. It projects an image of the natural environment in which people find themselves. Sometimes it suggests a supportive, positive environment; sometimes it implies a broken cosmos that presents obstacles for humanity to overcome. The usual content of cosmological myth is a "creation narrative," describing how this world came into being. Sometimes, however, cosmology lies embedded in a hymn of praise or a prophetic sermon. Creation as a general subject offers a key to this type of Jewish myth.

Anthropological myth concentrates on the human role in the world and the questions raised by that role. What purpose does humanity serve? What is the nature of human beings? What effect does humanity have on the non-human world? While Jewish mythic texts sometimes pose these questions very generally, most often they examine them from a more narrow focus. Jewish myth moves quickly from an evoking of humanity and its general task to a description of the duties of Jews in particular. Anthropological myths tend to focus on God's revelation to the Jews and how that revelation reveals human potentials and problems, actualizing the former and correcting the latter.

Political myth focuses on the nature of the Jewish people, its history and its destiny. Mythic narratives of this type illuminate the changing fortunes of a people whose national life often underwent dramatic alterations. Jews were exiled from their land; they experienced periods of power and times of political oppression; they evaluated military, political, and religious claims to leadership; they hoped for a "redemption" that would restore them to political independence. Not only national liberation and subjugation, but also shifting leadership groups influenced the political myths of Judaism. Often several competing political myths exist, each speaking for a specific power group within a single context. The two central images associated with this type of myth are exile and redemption, although related subjects such as the messiah often surface as well. Political myths suggest why exile occurred, explain how and when redemption will come about, and depict the nature of the messianic leader and the importance of that leader either as a sign of the redemption or as the agent bringing it about.

Scholars of Judaism debate the meaning, significance, function, and validity of each of these mythic types, offering linguistic, functionalist, and content oriented interpretations. Some investigators argue that each period of Jewish history creates its own mythic vocabulary. The symbolic language used by Jews in the period of the Bible, they suggest, reflects ancient Near Eastern influences. The mythic vocabulary of the Rabbinic period exhibits relationships to Hellenistic culture. Medieval Jewish philosophers draw on one mythic tradition, while medieval Jewish mystics express themselves using a distinctive mythology of their own. Using this paradigm, the modern period appears as a dramatic break with the past.

This model, which uses historical context to understand myth, has several flaws. The historicist approach appeals to our need for exact knowledge, for explanatory theories. But precisely because it offers what are apparently absolute answers and certain facts, chronology proves a false friend. First, as already noted, the major thematic content remains consistent across the different periods. Second, associating mythic texts with particular contexts of time and space confuses a literary reality with a historical one. The myths discussed here occur in writings, in textual expressions. The texts themselves cannot provide evidence as to whether these myths represent a "majority" or "minority" view. Relying on history to decode myths often obscures the way mythic alternatives compete with one another. No single group of myths represents a univocal, unambivalent function. Without recognizing this diversity, a scholar might impose a single meaning on a varied and conflicting body of data.

The approach used here maintains a traditional four-fold periodization of biblical, Rabbinic, medieval, and modern times[24] and refers specifically to the written documents that emerged in each period. The Bible, of

course, is a single work (although it turns out to be an anthology). Rabbinic texts are often conflicting sets of writings representing a range of religious, social, and political views. By "medieval" is meant two sorts of mythic texts, those of Jewish philosophers written under the influence of Greek, Muslim, and Christian thought, and those of Jewish mystics up through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Looking for myth in the modern period requires a broader definition of appropriate textual data. What constitutes the "modern" in this essay ranges from ideological writings by Zionists, feminists, and other political or religious activists to what has been called "belle lettres," that is, essays, poetry, novels, and short stories. To understand the mythic language of these texts, one must examine their literary form. Rather than begin with a historical sketch against which to decode myths in each section, the survey that follows looks to the literary structure in which the myths are imbedded. After establishing the framework within which the myths occur, each section summarizes and analyzes the central mythic content. In each case, the texts refer to creation, revelation, exile, and redemption.

Myth in the Hebrew Bible

The Hebrew Bible took shape as an anthology of religious literature. It contains several distinct genres of writing and often presents several competing descriptions of the same event, contradictory versions of similar laws, or opposing theological theories about reality. The mythical elements in this anthology share the diversity found in the other genres represented. Narratives containing myths, prophetic sermons alluding to them, or poetic evocations of mythic themes combine to make the Bible a rich resource for scholarship on myth.[25] Some myths take the shape of narratives concerning critical events in the human past—the creation of the world, a catastrophic flood, the founding of cities, the development of national identities. These myths show striking similarity to narratives found in texts associated with other ancient Near Eastern civilizations,[26] and one mode of understanding biblical myth, accordingly, is through comparison to these other stories.

Myth, however, appears in biblical writings other than narratives, and another approach to biblical myth takes these varied genres as its point of departure. Anthropologists, that is, have analyzed biblical narrative, law, and ritual to discover within them myth that functions psychologically or sociologically.[27] Laws, for instance, may evoke a mythic understanding of the world. The rule that fruitful trees, like Hebrew males, must be "circumcised" suggests a myth concerning productivity. A "cut" that judiciously prunes a living organism may, contrary to common expectations, increase, rather than decrease, fruitfulness. This intimates a vision of the world and may even serve a social or psychological function appropriate for myth. Sometimes even an apparently dull genealogy listing a king's forbears, for instance, may have surprising implications. The inclusion of a mother of doubtful purity or of an incestuous heritage may serve one of several mythic purposes. Even the story of a ritual sacrifice, the carving up of a carcass and the precise distribution of its parts, may reconcile people to a disjointed life or may confront them with the chaos inside themselves.

An alternative way of decoding biblical myth emphasizes the communal context in which these myths appear. A postcritical stance looks at biblical narratives as the possession of a community and discovers their significance in the collective consciousness of the group. This approach involves two related ideas. The first is that of intertextuality. Michael Fishbane teases out an intertextual code in which history becomes myth and myth history in a series of texts that refer back to each other.[28] The variety among the myths of creation, differences separating views of revelation, and the multi-polar visions of exile and redemption become, in this approach, equal participants in a vast community of meanings.

The second element is that of subjectivity. If there is a community of meaning within a text, then its final significance arises within a concrete community of others. The reading community as well as the communal library that is read provides a key to

myth. This element entails a subjectivity by which a reader becomes engaged not only with texts but with a living community of other people. Myth takes on significance when the reader asks, "What does this mean for us?" By reading the myths with a postmodern openness that allows several meanings, this approach refuses to proclaim any single explanation of myth paramount. Instead it privileges and deems most important an affective link with the community.[29]

In content, biblical myth evokes diverse models of creation, human nature, and the redemptive process. Images of creation occur throughout the Hebrew Bible from the famous creation stories in Genesis through references in the prophets and the Psalms. Three variant themes appear in these stories. One theme, found in its fullest expression in Gen. 1:1–2:4 but also intimated in Isaiah 40, emphasizes an organic development in which one creation emanates out of another through progressively fine differentiation. Light emerges when differentiated from darkness, land from the differentiation of sky and water, one type of animal arises from differentiation from another. This creative pattern parallels biological procreation in which new beings derive from previous ones.

A second pattern, illustrated in prophetic and Psalmic materials (see Is. 14, Ezek. 28; 51:9–13, Ps. 104:1–13), emphasizes conflict and drama. God struggles with the recalcitrant powers of chaos and darkness. The divinity vanquishes them by setting limits to the raging waters, subduing the sea monsters, and reducing an originally powerful but rebellious humanity—sometimes seen as a prince in a great garden—to more manageable proportions.

A third mythic strand, found in Gen. 2:4b-4:24, for example, mediates between these two. In it, compromise and negotiation replace either organic creation or a battle against chaos. God experiments with the world, using a more mechanistic model. In this model God creates in an analogous way to human construction; the world is God's because "he made it," just as artisans own the work of their hands.

What function might these stories serve? Some interpreters claim that they reveal repressed psychological tensions. Theodor Reik, for example, finds in Gen. 2–3 a reversal of the natural order by which women give birth to men. He understands this as a mythic way to confront men with their ambivalence toward women and childbirth.[30] Edmund Leach claims that each mythic narrative reiterates the same "persistent sequence of binary discriminations," and thus he discovers a unity underlying the narrative complexity. All three versions of creation are interacting possibilities referring to the range of human experience (see Leach, op. cit., pp. 7–23). Reik affirms the conflict among the myths, while Leach sees the diversity transcended by a deeper unity.

The myths of creation offer a complex set of diverse narratives that different scholars perceive as fulfilling sometimes opposite functions. The same variety characterizes the anthropological myths of the Bible. Basic to that variety is a single judgment concerning human nature: human beings need control and refinement. The Bible describes several continuing conflicts among people: between males and females, between shepherds, farmers, and urbanites, between generations, among siblings, and among the conflicting impulses within the human psyche. These stories set the stage for the laws and rituals of the Bible. In its central anthropological concern, biblical legislation presupposes the need for a mechanism, attuned to these basic realities of human nature, that can provide such refinement and control. While myth implies narrative and story, it thus may surface as the foundation of ethical and ritual imperatives.

Biblical rituals exemplify a type of law that implies a myth. Sometimes the myth attached to a ritual is clear: both Gen. 17 and Exod. 4 supply the ritual of circumcision with a narrative setting. At other times the mythic substratum of the ritual needs to be excavated. Upon examination, two general types of myth underlie biblical legislation. One set of rituals demands that people submit to a superior and supernatural power. Human nature is so degenerate and sinful that people cannot rescue themselves. Their natural inclinations overpower them despite themselves. They require divine assistance to ameliorate themselves. A divinely revealed ritual transforms and perfects their nature.

To perform this ritual, priest are entrusted with special powers and precise directions to follow. By putting the procedure into effect, they can work a miraculous change on their people, for instance, sprinkling the blood of sacrificial animals so that the community becomes pure (see, e.g., Lev. 16).

The myth that generates this first type of ritual describes humanity as requiring supernatural assistance through priestly intermediaries. Another type of ritual presupposes a myth that conceives of every person as a potential priest and the people of Israel as a "nation of priests" (Exod. 19:6). According to this myth, all Israelites, not just priests, participate in the rituals that transform human nature. The rituals enable those who perform them to transcend their natural limitations and so assume a human nature that, through obedience to divine commandments, can develop positive and successful traits. Lev. 17–26 sets out moral, dietary, and sexual laws that every Israelite must observe to ensure the well-being of the community. Negative aspects of human nature come under the control of divine legislation. Lev. 11:1–46 establishes permitted and forbidden foods. No explanation of these ritual restrictions occurs in the biblical text, yet the implication of Lev. 26 seems to apply here as well: obedience to the rules brings prosperity and success, disobedience leads to chaos and disaster.

These diverse rituals with their different mythic presuppositions have occasioned scholarly debate concerning the meaning of biblical myth. In the nineteenth century, the anthropologist W. Robertson Smith offered a striking analysis of biblical ritual and myth. He understood the religious practices, the myth and ritual, described in the Bible within the context of ancient Semitic religion generally. Smith thus read biblical ritual as testifying to a social myth of a "blood bond" by which human beings absorb into themselves the spirit of that which is sacrificed. Through this absorption they create a spiritual link among all who have shared in the sacrifice.[31] The myth of a new reality created by the extraordinary activities of sacrificing and consuming a victim underlies and legitimates the ritual act.

The contemporary anthropologist Mary Douglas has focused attention on the dietary laws, examining the ordered and rational nature of their categorization of reality. Douglas sees the mythic world-view illuminated by dietary restrictions as emphasizing wholeness and completeness. While the world may not always look pure and perfect, the biblical structure offers a model of how it should manifest itself. The myth expresses itself as a story of creation: "God's work through the blessing is essentially to create order, through which men's affairs prosper."[32] In effect, however, the operative myth concerns human abilities. Not only does God create a perfect world, human beings as well can imitate the divine and exemplify that divine order in the way they control their own lives.

We see that, as with creation myths, so concerning the meaning of anthropological ones, analysts differ. Some emphasize the transformative power of ritual and the myths supporting it. Others emphasize how ritual, because of its underlying myths, empowers human action. These different understandings of anthropological myth may actually be complementary rather than contradictory, for, at times, the bible seems to advocate one understanding of human nature and at other times another. The different strands in the mythic material intertwine in strange ways.

The same complexity occurs in the Bible's political myths, as is illustrated especially well by the pivotal story of the Exodus from Egypt. According to this myth, Israel began as a nation when God appointed Moses to lead a group of slaves from bondage in Egypt to a land promised to their progenitors. The Bible tells this story in several different ways. Sometimes the story emphasizes a miraculous escape from slavery followed by inheritance of the promised land (Ps. 105:23–44). Elsewhere we find an intermediary stage during which the people refuse to obey God and demonstrate their rebellious character (Ps. 106:7–39). Other biblical texts locate a divine revelation on Mount Sinai during the intermediary period (Neh. 9:9–25). These variations reveal three different ways in which Israel understands itself. The people may derive its identity from the

land it has inherited. The national homeland, the culture of place and language, appears as the identifying marks of an Israelite in the first myth. The second myth focuses on national character rather than national geography. The rebellious social response of the people typifies their political order. Israel in this paradigm appears as an unruly social unit needing strict rules and guidance. The third paradigm understands Israel as a people of revelation, with the central and defining moment of the Exodus being the receiving of Torah in the wilderness. To be a member of this people implies neither a national homeland nor an inherent nature. Instead it depends on accepting the teachings of revelation. To become part of this people means to follow Torah.

Frank Cross interprets the range of Exodus myths as reflecting changing views of reality (op. cit., pp. 88–174), to which he associates as well changing myths of creation. The motif of Israel's holy war in which a slave people conquers its land parallels the myth of God's creation as a conquest of chaos. The Exodus understood as an explanation for national dispersion and political failure resembles the myth that views creation as a story of compromise and people's continual disappointing of God. Finally, the Exodus as the occasion of Torah points to an eschatological future, to a new creation in which the promises of Torah find fulfillment. This orientation imputes a divine intention to Torah that will inevitably be realized. In all these cases, the myth affirms the status quo and, whether triumphant, defeatist, or optimistic, the myth gives a reason to accept present conditions.

The Exodus myth contrasts with a related political myth—often called "messianic"—that anticipates a future time of social change and revolution. The term "messiah" literally refers to an anointed political or religious leader. Messianic myth, however, describes the ideal characteristics of such a leader. The Bible often presents heroes of the past in an idealized way. Their genealogical pedigree, their youthful experience, and their heroic exploits provide a model for later generations. Sometimes a former leader articulates this idealized picture: the Bible records the words of both King David and King Solomon in such a mythic fashion. At other times a prophetic speech will enumerate the virtues expected of a true leader.

Yet other myths look to the end of time without explicit reference to a messianic hero. These eschatological myths often reverse the myths of creation and portray a return to chaos. They imagine a penultimate battle among supernal beings followed by a new creation that corrects the abuses of the contemporary world order. Biblical myth offers conflicting portraits of this final sequence of events as well as of the nature and function of a messianic leader.

These myths yield diverse interpretations. Both Gershom Scholem and Walter Benjamin recognized dangerous political implications in messianic change, which they viewed as disturbing, as disruptive of the status quo. Despite this agreement, they disagreed about the desirability of a messianic myth (Handelman, op. cit., pp. 35–46, 118, 161). Benjamin, for his part, often identified his own politics with the messianic, with his stressing of the need to end "history," to make a radical beginning. The messianic was not a goal toward which people strove but rather a break with all previous progress, a break Benjamin found essential for the renewal of human society. Unlike Benjamin, Scholem did not embrace this alteration but sought to avoid it. He was suspicious of the messianic because he held that it disrupted society. By contrast to both these scholars, Frank Cross sees biblical political myth, including that of the Exodus, as conservative, breeding acceptance of the status quo.

As with anthropological myth or creation mythology, one need not imagine biblical political myth as fulfilling only one single function. Biblical mythology, rather, shows diversity and hence inspires diverse responses among students of myth. It embraces creation myths of conflict, organic birth, and negotiated compromise. Some interpreters explain this in terms of the dynamic conflicts within the human psyche. Others see it as a manifestation of the basic binary structure of human consciousness.

Biblical anthropology sometimes despairs of human nature and trusts only to miraculously revealed rituals that change that nature. Other biblical myths envision human

nature more positively and advance a ritualism that urges humanity to imitate the rationality of the deity. Again analysts divide over whether that myth creates a "blood bond" of initiated members or whether it merely draws attention to the rationality of the universe. Finally the political myth of the Exodus, understood in one of several ways, contrasts with the political myth of the messiah, in any of its manifestations. Some theorists of myth focus on the conservative nature of the Exodus myth, while others emphasize the radicality of the messianic myth. In every case, the Bible exemplifies variety and diversity both in the data it provides and in the way scholars have understood it.

Rabbinic Mythology

What is "Rabbinic" mythology? Gary Porton introduces his *Understanding Rabbinic Midrash: Texts and Commentary* (New Jersey, 1985, pp. 1–5) with a useful contrast between the modern, everyday usage of the term "rabbi" and its technical meaning applied to texts produced in late antiquity. He notes that the term "Rabbinic refers to the way of life, the beliefs, the ideas, the ideals, and the behaviors of the rabbis of late antiquity" (ibid., p. 4). These traits as illustrated by one set of "Rabbinic" writings from antiquity need not be identical with those found in other sets of writings. While Porton traces some common presuppositions of the Rabbinic genre of midrash, he also painstakingly articulates the differences among the various collections he studies. Other scholars approach this material as an intertextual whole in which one set of writings supplements another. In order to discover the Rabbinic use of the parable, for example, David Stern brings illustrations from a varied range of sources. Daniel Boyarin looks to the "gapped and dialogical" nature of texts to find a single perspective.[33]

Despite their clear disagreements, both approaches to Rabbinic literature concur regarding the centrality of the "Torah myth," which holds that the surest guide to truth is the divine revelation as interpreted and taught by the rabbis of antiquity. The myth of Torah permeates Rabbinic texts: Torah is the key to redemption, it is the focal experience of revelation, and it is a mirror of God's own activities. This myth, created and sustained by rabbis, the scholarly experts in Torah, not only reinforced the power of these leaders but may indeed have shaped it. Creation myths confirmed the magical ability of these men; revelation myths legitimated their status; myths of redemption provided an alternative to a failed political program.[34]

Rabbinic creation myths, like biblical ones, present several conflicting cosmologies. Some myths depict God's creating the world out of himself. One text claims that he wrapped himself in a prayer shawl and irradiated creation from his luminous being (Gen. Rab. 3:4). Other texts portray God's acting as an artisan (ibid. 1:1), an architect who uses Torah as the blueprint for the cosmos. Still other depictions imagine God as a king who consults with angelic courtiers, like a father who acts out of mercy toward his children, or like a judge who invokes pure justice. These descriptions reveal a remarkable ambivalence. On the one hand, God appears as a wise and benevolent architect of the world. On the other hand, divine creative power often seems arbitrary, judgmental, or dangerously potent. God is both a creator who loves the creation and a supernatural being whose creative force can overwhelm the creation.

Of course these various views are all anthropomorphic; they consider divine creativity based on an analogy with human creativity. That creativity, strikingly, accords with the creative actions that rabbis themselves pursue. The Jew who looks to Torah, these texts assume, has the potential to imitate the divine, both in the positive sense of being creative and in the negative sense of possessing a potentially lethal force. Public worship offers the rabbis one sphere of power and control, for God obligingly creates the world by engaging in prayer. The rabbis sometimes serve as artisans, either literally or as architects of the social order. The rabbis may engage in political activities like courtiers, demand respect from their disciples as fathers expect from their children, or pronounce legal decisions like a

judge. In every case the type of action that the rabbis actually carry out is imagined as a possible creative deed of the divine.

This analogy suggests that rabbis imitate divine creativity, which has clear, positive possibilities. Rabbis like God can control the natural world. In time of drought they bring rain; in time of scarcity they create living animals out of clay. Yet a negative misuse of this potential also may occur. Powers can be used to undermine society rather than help it. Some Rabbinic texts warn against speculating about divine creativity. Cautionary tales suggest the dangers involved as those who try to use creative power consume themselves or others in the attempt.

Stories of inter-Rabbinic conflict often focus on this question of creative power. One such story tells of the miracle worker Honi the Circle-Drawer (B. Ta. 23a). Several elements combine in the tale. First, Honi clearly imitates the divine power over nature. When a drought appears he first reprimands people for trusting him and not God, and when he pleads to God for rain he calls the people ignorant ones who "cannot tell the difference between their father in heaven and their father here on earth." Yet his power has its limits. God, the rabbis say, should punish him. In fact, the story tells how he finally must implore God to send him death as a release from a life impossible to maintain. This myth expresses the ambivalence of power, the problems of political authority. When compared with tales of other miracle workers, Honi appears as one possible model for imitating divine creativity measured against other models of strikingly different ways for rabbis to exemplify the divine creativity.[35]

The diversity in this appraisal of the divine creative forces appears as well in an understanding of human nature. Richard L. Rubenstein suggests the Rabbinic myths balance human freedom against the experience of human limitations. The aim, he states "is not to deny freedom to the creature, but to allow as much freedom as is consistent with the inherent limitations and structure of the created order."[36] Torah, for the rabbis, prescribes that domain of limited freedom. Myths depicting the revelation of Torah convey a sense of the ambivalent nature of human beings. The central scene of these myths of revelation is that of Moses' ascent to Sinai to receive the Torah. In some depictions God provides Torah as a gift to a ready and willing people; in others the nation must be coerced into accepting God's revealed law. Some narratives describe Moses' ascent and receiving of the gift without incident. Other tales picture him contending against the angels who would rather the Torah remain with them. Some versions of the event describe revelation as a once and forever act; other versions claim that an echo of the divine voice never ceases.

The diversity of descriptions applies as well to ways in which those who follow after the event of revelation can recapture it. Some stories claim that a modern Jew seeking knowledge of revelation must attain the same level of competence as Moses, must become an adept able to ascend to the angelic powers to gain access to the continuing flow of Torah. In other cases, being a disciple of a sage, learning at the feet of one who has inherited Torah from the past, suffices. Revelation after Moses occurs through the authorized channels of teaching.

The ambivalence toward human nature—its potential and its problems—not only prescribes a "limited freedom" as Rubenstein suggests. The same combination of attraction and wariness that the texts attribute to creation also occurs in the myths about Torah. Torah can cure, but it can also poison. Perhaps the most dramatic illustration of this ambivalence occurs in the stories told about one of the most perplexing Rabbinic figures, R. Aqiba.[37] Aqiba ben Joseph begins as an ignorant shepherd who falls in love with a rich man's daughter. This erotic connection motivates him to become a scholar. Scholarship transforms him, and he develops into a subtle interpreter of the Torah. His interpretations are said to perplex even Moses. Yet Aqiba also becomes a political activist. While at first acting as mediator for Rabbinic conflicts, he eventually leads a revolt against Rome. His activism leads him into imprisonment and finally execution by the Romans. The stories tell that when brought out to his death, Aqiba

expounded the meaning of the Shema-prayer, which cites Deuteronomy 6:4. Dying with the words "The Lord is One" on his lips, Aqiba, according to the story, died by "the kiss of God."

Aqiba certainly finds a "cure" in the Torah for his ignorance and his erotic impulses. He channels these into the Rabbinic activity of study. Yet Aqiba also finds himself drawn to an activist path that leads to death. Not a successful revolt against the Romans but a beautiful death (euthanasia, in its literal meaning) awaits him. Scholars of this material debate the meaning of this story. Herbert Basser, for example, takes Daniel Boyarin to task for making Aqiba's martyrdom into an exaltation of a beautiful death.[38] The story itself, however, seems intentionally ambiguous, pointing to the diverse possibilities of the effect of Torah on a person's life.

The political myths of Rabbinic texts offer equally ambivalent treatments of earlier motifs.[39] Often, the idea of the messiah fades into the background, and political models of Jewish communal life take shape independently of a messianic hope. Two tales seem particularly remarkable. One again involves Aqiba, who, according to Rabbinic sources, supported the messianic uprising under Simeon bar Kokhba. Despite warnings from his colleagues, Aqiba engaged in a disastrous project that led to his death. In the Rabbinic sources, that death, however, transfigured him, and by means of his Torah knowledge, he gained entrance into the World to Come. Aqiba's claim to immortality thus is shown to lie not in his political activity but in his understanding of Torah piety. In another tale, Yohanan ben Zakkai reveals how piety replaces politics. During the siege of Jerusalem, he feigns death to escape the city and enter the camp of the besieger, Vespasian. Through a false death that gains him permission to begin a Rabbinic academy, he ensures the life of Judaism. Again and again in this literature, life thus emerges from Torah and not through worldly politics.

These two stories illustrate what Richard Rubenstein saw as an exaltation of powerlessness. He comments that powerlessness is often "praised as indispensable for maintaining the monotheistic and ethical purity of Judaism" (*The Religious Imagination*, p. 33). Yet the two stories have very different versions of the response to powerlessness. The story of Aqiba sees two alternatives: either political revolution or martyrdom. Aqiba's final transfiguration shows the glory of the latter. The story of Yohanan, however, sees another alternative, that of a creative avoidance of politics altogether. Jews need not resist the political order nor submit to it. They can withdraw to a spiritual piety that keeps them beyond the reach of the political.

This tension between the political alternatives suggested in the stories of Aqiba and Yohanan parallels the tensions in the cosmological and anthropological myths as well. The Rabbinic material raises alternative possibilities for the conception of the world, for understanding human nature, and for comprehending the political order. Theorists of myth who look at this material may choose to emphasize one or the other pole. Yet the ambivalence transcends any easy decision for one alternative over another.

Medieval Myths

In medieval times, Jews living under Christian or Muslim domination produced legal works, poetic liturgy, philosophical treatises, and mystical writings. Deriving from the philosophers and mystics, the mythical texts of this period share many themes and motifs with biblical and Rabbinic myth. They place a special emphasis on techniques for discovering truth and develop systems within which truth must be evaluated. In this enterprise, Jewish legalists, philosophers, and mystics offered competing systems of reality that, though sometimes combined in an uneasy alliance, more often conflicted as each sought to dominate Jewish consciousness.[40] Even so, within these works, the common search for mythic expression overrides the differences between the philosophical and mystical systems. Gershom Scholem, therefore, is wrong when he contrasts the philosophers and rabbis on the one hand to the mystics on the other and associates myth only with the latter.[41] The difference between the two is not in the act of using myth but only in

the images expressing it. Both philosophers and mystics use their favorite images to reinforce a systematic cosmology that includes creation, revelation, and redemption. At the heart of both philosophical and mystical myth lies the desire for a unified universe, a cosmos in which every element hangs together as part of a coherent whole.

Yehuda Liebes and Elliot Wolfson examine how mystical symbols and tropes generally use concrete, anthropomorphic images to communicate mythic conceptions of creation, revelation, and redemption. They demonstrate the complex interweaving of inherited themes and new perspectives on the world.[42] Remarkably, these myths often couch their narratives in gendered language, portraying the divine not merely as gendered, but multi-gendered. The divine potencies include both male and female properties. The dramatic schema tends to envision a remasculinization of the feminine, a reincorportation of the darker, more elusive side of the divinity within the luminosity of the male side. While this erotic theme has, understandably, attracted psychological analysis, a more recent trend understands these myths as imaginative constructions of language. Postmodern philosophy provides categories useful when decoding and deconstructing the meaning of this language.

The myths occurring in philosophical writing have received less attention. Their presence in preaching, however, gives evidence for their popularity among sophisticated thinkers.[43] Using rigorous argumentation, philosophical myths compile proofs of God's existence, rational interpretations of the revelational process, and sophisticated renderings of messianic prophecies. Upon examination, however, these outward forms disguise the inner purpose. The philosopher exposes a human side barely hidden by the appearance of detached rationalism. The true subject, as David Novak argues, is not the idea of God but the image of humanity and its social implications.[44] Philosophical myths function both anthropologically and politically to ground Jewish life and practice in human experience. Not only did philosophers seek to provide rational explanations of Jewish myths concerning creation, revelation, and redemption, but they also created myths in the style of Plato's allegories and illustrations to communicate the truths of rationalism. The concern to bridge the gap between the Bible and its historical paradigm and Greek science with its distinctive view of cosmic reality animated the medieval philosophical enterprise.[45]

Medieval Jewish philosophers asked three central questions: whether God created freely or of necessity, whether an eternal matter co-exists with God, and whether the world has been brought into existence for a purpose. These three questions are central in medieval philosophical discussions of creation, because they are crucial to a reconciliation of biblical theory and the philosophies of Plato, Aristotle, and the Stoics. From Philo of Alexandria and Isaac Israeli through Isaac Abrabanel and Hasdai Crescas, Jewish thinkers provided divergent answers to the question of whether the biblical view was compatible with the rationalistic one. While offering a distinctive harmonization, each thinker, maintained the rationality of the Torah and its principles. Some described creation as an act in which the divine authorized an intellectual principle to construct the universe. Others argued that creation out of an eternal pre-existent matter in no way impairs the divine uniqueness. Others claim that while human reason is fitted for explaining what occurs within the created world, it lacks the equipment necessary to comprehend creation itself. In each of these ways Jewish thinkers construed the universe as compatible with human reason and within the Judaic and the Greek frameworks of thought alike.

Jewish mystics faced a similar problem. Philosophers harmonize their experience of rational truth with the texts of Jewish tradition. Mystics harmonize their experience of transcendent truth with those same texts. Both groups create a mythology that corresponds to their confrontation with reality. Philosophers ask how texts correspond to the teaching they feel reveals the actual workings of the world. Mystics evoke from the same texts a reality that mirrors the sufferings and possibilities of their own lives.

The variety of creation stories that mystics tell mirrors Jewish experiences with reality. Some stories focus on conflict. They

suggest that the creation event precipitates a crisis in which the skeleton of reality cracks, in which sparks of holiness are trapped in an evil substance, or in which the ordered structure of the universe gets wrenched out of joint. Other stories portray a more tranquil sequence. In these stories one divine force flows out into another, generative powers exercise their natural potencies, or successive generations recapitulate the original divine order. These different images merge themes found in classical Rabbinic works, in Greek mystery religions, in Neo-Platonism, and in Gnostic speculation. Often the same mystical images reappear in very different creation myths. The variety involved serves a single purpose, to establish the basis on which coherence arises out of what is plainly and undeniably a fragmented world. Mystics use a unity of images to express a variety of cosmologies to give an encoded description of how Jews encounter reality. The multi-layered imaginative vocabulary offers continuity despite diversity. It thereby reassures Jews that even as different Jewish groups and individuals generate divisive experiences, a common set of symbols unites them.

This desire for unity within diversity receives a strange twist in the consideration of Torah and its implication for understanding human nature. Although admitting that revelation must be associated with Moses and Mount Sinai, both philosophers and mystics focus attention on decoding that revelation through prophetic insight. The original revelation, as it were, hides the golden apples of prophecy behind silver filigree, protecting but also disguising it. Special techniques enable an interpreter to gain access to the one true meaning of revelation despite the variety that apparently shines out from the various windows in the filigree. Mystics compared this process to that of divesting a woman of her garments and then, through unification with her, restoring her original power by reincorporating her into the original cosmic pattern. Philosophers also recognized that gleaning truth occurs in a gradual process. They compared this process to glimpsing the world during a stormy night through flashes of lightning that provide sporadic vision. While the narrative images used by mystics and philosophers differ, the myth itself remains the same. In both cases, revelation, even if it occurred once in the past, requires a ladder of intellectual and spiritual ascension to be reappropriated in the present. The ability to receive the truths of revelation reveals the true nature of the adept who has attained this skill.

That ladder of ascension that provides access to revelation involves a progressive amelioration of human nature. Some myths portray this process as weaning the intellect from its bodily sheath. Ascetic training, intellectual rigor, and disassociation from immorality fashion a prophetic personality. One myth describes the soul as a mirror in which divine truth may reflect itself. Corruption and concern with material things darkens and obscures the mirror. The prophet has cleansed the surface of the mirror so that it shines and reflects the divinity clearly. Some myths see prophetic power as flowing necessarily from this act of self-cleansing. Others declare that God, in the last resort, must decide whether an adept receives that for which he has prepared. Nevertheless, even here, the preparation follows a necessary and logical path.

Other myths describe more dramatic and arbitrary divine actions. According to one myth, Jews have a special place in the divine plan. They possess a peculiar potential for prophecy. Which of them becomes a prophet is, to some extent, an arbitrary decision of God, for the divinity chooses the instrument who will receive the influx of holy spirit. Yet, even in this case, certain prerequisites appear necessary. Several writers maintain that prophetic inspiration occurs only in the land of Israel. Additionally, many traditional Judaic elements and practices become prerequisites for prophecy: Hebrew is the language of prophecy, performance of certain rites and rituals makes prophecy more likely, knowledge of Rabbinic law is a necessity for becoming a prophet. While God is seen as acting according to the divine will, and not of necessity, some actions more than others are understood to draw one closer to that divine will. Some myths, finally, suggest that only certain exalted souls can become prophets. An individual might be

born with such a soul, gain it by identification with an earlier hero or through a specially provided divine grace. In these myths a mystical or philosophical teacher guides adepts on their way, showing them how to think philosophically or how to potentiate the powers latent in themselves.

The myths of revelation given by both philosophers and mystics in the medieval period seem to serve a sociological function. They justify the claims of certain leadership groups to elite status. Against those leaders who argue that only mastery of the Judaic legal system provides authority, these myths legitimate others whose ability to perform miracles, intellectual prowess, or insight into the human spirit demonstrates their superiority. The use of gendered language suggests a psychological dimension in these myths. The incorporation of the feminine within the male offers a paradigmatic model for psychological wholeness, for the integration of the masculine and feminine aspects of the psyche, as Carl Jung would express it. Put differently, this means that a mystic must possess a well-balanced psyche. Taken together, the three elements in the Jewish anthropological myths of the medieval period draw a picture of an ideal leader. The true leader, these myths suggest, must possess an imagination capable of generating ever-new meanings from the inherited texts of Judaism, a sociological status of honor within the community, and psychological health.

The myth of Torah evinces strong ties to cosmological myths of creation. Several intertwined metaphors permeate stories of creation and myths of prophetic understanding of revelation alike. The metaphors of light, sparks of divinity, and flashes of illumination see darkness as an alien force invading and obscuring creation. The metaphors of erotic yearning, of desire for reunification with one's primal source, and the need to reintegrate the female within the male reflect an uneasiness and discomfort within experience, a sense that reality has lost its original wholeness and integrity. These metaphors surface in discussions of revelation as well. The true leader is the one who has grasped the true unity of creation and who recognizes the place of human beings in the scheme of creation and in repairing damage to the world. The prophetic reader of Torah penetrates the mysteries of eroticism in the supernatural and masters the potent forces hidden within both creation and revelation.

Medieval theories of salvation and redemption might appear to mirror these political considerations. They do tend to reflect the historical context of the elite leaders who formulated them. Their distinctive concern, however, seems more ideological and philosophical than political. Two types of speculation predominate; one focuses on the salvation of the worthy individual and the other on the triumphant success of the Jewish people. While related to the culturally different experiences of Ashkenazic and Sephardic Jewry, these two also reflect certain common features.[46] Both integrate a conception of the ideal universe, a diagnosis of the problems of present existence, and a systematic view of reality. A dramatic illustration of such an integrated myth of redemption is that of the Golem.[47] The myth describes how an exalted adept can construct a model human being from inert matter and, through the use of the magic inherent in Hebrew letters, vitalize that image. By doing this, the adept retraces the stages by which divine power flows into the world and imitates God's creative force. This myth provides a symbol of redemption. It evokes a time when the perfect order has been restored and matter has become reunited with its spiritual source. The prophetic seer initiates redemption by reversing the process of creation. This redemptive myth integrates a cosmology portraying the downward flow of divine forces with a prophetic myth of a mystic master and the eschatological vision of a material world elevated to spirituality.

Even the messianic myths of the period share this orientation. Although the philosophers Moses Maimonides and Judah Halevi have different criteria for the messianic fulfillment, both expect a political revival of the Jewish people. Both describe the rebirth of prophecy and the civil independence of the Jewish people. This expectation of a this-worldly messianic time corresponds to the philosophical system in which politics, imagination, and prophecy are intertwined. The logical and political cosmic reality that

the philosophers sketch in their theories of truth finds fulfillment in the politics of redemption. Both Halevi and Maimonides posit certain enduring realities in the world of experience, and these realities in turn shape their messianic expectation.

Jewish mystics, like the philosophers, disagreed on the implication of messianic redemption but agreed that redemption must be understood in terms of both myths of creation and myths of prophecy. Mystics often describe the messiah as appearing as the result of restoring the world to its pristine state. This ideal assumes a crisis at creation that disrupted the order of reality. It envisions the mystic sage as a prophet who, through an esoteric study of Torah, has mastered a way to reverse the original crisis and repair the damage. The figure of the messiah, in this myth, symbolically represents the return to that ideal condition disrupted at creation and repaired by prophecy. A second myth, however, portrays the messianic world as entirely new, utterly unprecedented. The messiah that the mystic summons will alter cosmic reality. The mystic uses his skills to induce the coming of this agent of great change. This myth understands both creation and the purposes of prophecy differently from the first. In this view, redemption as transformation occurs because creation began as a challenge or an invitation to human creativity. The human being who knows the secrets of Torah can fulfill the original human task.

These two myths differ in their specific demands on the mystic and in their depiction of the cosmic alteration that the messianic time entails. Yet they can be coupled (the Zohar, for example, contains both myths side by side), since the main point is that redemption involves cosmic events. These myths serve less of a political function and act more to reinforce the general picture of reality that the thinker wishes to express.

Jewish philosophers and mystics offer a varied set of cosmological, anthropological, and political myths. Yet this variety points to an even deeper diversity among medieval Jewish thinkers. Philosophers disagreed concerning the underlying structure of reality and the place of revelation and redemption within that structure. Mystics contested with one another to see which image of reality would prevail. Yehuda Liebes notes the consequence of this competition. He argues that myth occurs spontaneously in human culture. To this natural religious expression, the Kabbalah adds, he contends, "systematic formulation . . . rigid frameworks." The structuring of myth by rival thinkers creates rival frameworks. This in turn weakens the "personal, spontaneous vitality" of myth. Whether or not Liebes is right in seeing the Kabbalah as a diminution of myth, he demonstrates how medieval Jewish thinking expressed itself in competitive systems of myth.

Modern Jewish Myths

Modern myth looks distinctively, almost essentially, different from pre-modern myth. When novels and newspapers, commercial advertisements and religious tracts, and cinematic art no less than philosophy provide mythology, the line between the mythic and the non-mythic blurs. Such blurred distinctions lead beyond modernity to postmodernity. Jacques Derrida locates this dichotomy between "mythus" and "logos" as far back as Plato's dialogues, and he criticizes any easy demarcation between "myth" and "truth," "poetry" and "philosophy" as misleading. Many Jewish thinkers today agree with this critique. Derrida's own sense of standing beyond Hellenism and Hebraism strikes a resonating chord among contemporary Jews who read Jewish texts, both modern and ancient, in deconstructionist fashion. Derrida, who stands beyond myth and logos, thus offers a hermeneutics that allows Jewish interpreters of myth to transform logos into myth and myth into logos.[48]

That process of blurring the lines between myth and philosophy began at the dawn of modernity, as Jewish theologians adapted the symbols and texts of Judaism to the major myths of the European Enlightenment. Religious ideologies replaced religious philosophies as the basic expression of Jewish belief. Secular Jewish leaders communicated an ideological program through the use of Judaic symbols and practices. Yet these apparently "secular" and "realistic" approaches

to Judaism actually contained much that is mythic.

This secular myth derives from poets, novelists, politicians, and scholars. Sometimes they provide what could be called a new type of midrash, a reworking of ancient themes to convey new perspectives on reality.[49] Martin Buber, Isaac Loeb Peretz, Micah Joseph Ben Gorion, Hayyim Nahman Bialik, and Saul Tchernikowsky offer mythic presentations of older material in a new guise. That old material does not disguise the novelty in the reality these writers present. The new myths reflect an experience of alienation, secularization, and discontent. They use the older mythic images to create a new story, to tell a new tale.

Some of these myths—like those of the Zionists, who construct diverse myths out of the Judaic past to legitimize their nationalistic interpretation of Judaism[50]—describe one kind of political reality. Other contemporary Jewish myths focus on a different political reality. For instance, groups of Jews often excluded from the community of Judaic culture—women, homosexuals, and other "strangers"—find that they too can tell their story by using the images of older Jewish mythology.[51] Women often complain that the Judaic mythic heritage preserves stereotyped views of women. Yet they use that heritage as a resource for creating new myths intended to liberate Jews today from gender-related constrictions.[52]

A set of Jewish myths centered on the twin events that marked the midpoint of the twentieth-century—the Nazi slaughter of six million Jews and the rebirth of an independent Jewish state—has influenced contemporary thinkers.[53] These historical occurrences become the basis for a new way of understanding reality, human nature, and Jewish political hope. Indeed, some modern theologians diagnose these events as symptoms of a failure of mythology. They hold that the Holocaust occurred because the modern nation state usurped control of myth. The State of Israel, in turn, flounders because of its government's realistic politics devoid of mythic power. In this view, new myths—whether in political ideology, in literary forms, or in theological terms—must replace the old ones that have been abandoned.[54] Thinkers must reappropriate older motifs from the Judaic past to provide a new framework within which to understand the disasters and triumphs of modern Jewish history.

Transformed conceptions of the world impelled Jewish theologians, novelists, and poets from the nineteenth century onwards to refashion traditional Jewish myth. One prevalent myth proclaimed inevitable humanistic progress. History appeared as a dynamic advancement from one stage of civilization to an ever higher one. Scientific and social progress seemed built into the fabric of the universe. Thinkers proclaimed faith in humanity's irreversible triumph over the evils of war, inequity, and intolerance, over the challenges of a recalcitrant natural environment, and over the dark depths of the human spirit.

This myth sometimes expresses itself as an affirmation of universalism. It offers the optimistic picture of a united humanity, sharing a basic concern for the divine and sensitivity to transcendence independent of parochial religious traditions. It celebrates a common human interest in the welfare of others. Human beings care for one another, this myth claims, because they have compassion for one another. The myth takes this word literally, reading compassion as "com" "passion," a "feeling" of "withness." People, it is argued, possess the ability sympathetically to identify with the suffering of every other person. Liberal Jewish movements, whether religious in nature like classical Reform or political in orientation like Jewish socialism, seize upon this myth of a compassionate human nature.

The events of the mid-twentieth century challenged that optimistic myth of progress. The Nazi slaughter of six million Jews has emerged as a symbol of the irreducible and permanent residue of evil in human life. The death camps of Nazi Germany, of Auschwitz in particular, stand as poignant images of unredeemable evil. The world does not progress toward ever higher stages. Instead, it continually frustrates human efforts to improve the cosmos, human society, and human nature.

Taking its cue from this myth, Zionism sketches a humanity mired in self-interest,

inevitably drawn into economic, social, and political conflict. Zionism responds to this human nature by proclaiming the need for Jewish self-defense, for Jewish self-affirmation and self-distinction. The Zionist offers the myth of the "new man," who awakens to a new day in the Jewish homeland (the male-exclusive term is used intentionally here; the Zionist vision focused on masculinity and Jewish strength). Living as a natural man, the Jew in Israel unabashedly celebrates his individuality and parochial identity. This "new man" has liberated himself from universality to embrace his own true nature.

Recognition of irredeemable evil and acceptance of parochialism lead to some unexpected mythology. Jewish women, so obviously excluded from the Zionist mythology, recreate a Judaism more congenial to their gender. They often create a myth parallel to that of the Zionists. Just as Zionists claim that Jew and non-Jew can never be reconciled, so women sometimes aver that the opposition between men and women cannot be reconciled. Just as Zionists call for a new homeland and a new man, so Jewish feminists seek a refuge of their own and an exclusive community made up of new "womyn" (a locution developed to avoid the offensive term "man"). They insist that only a society of women, often a specifically lesbian community, can protect them from male predation. The ancient Jewish myth of Lilith, a night demon whose femininity sometimes transmogrifies itself into masculine power, takes on a new shape. Lilith in the new myth seeks her own kind, other women, forges an alliance with the more compliant woman "Eve" and liberates herself from the bondage under which men have dominated her. Other Jewish women take a more optimistic view of human nature. They, like the universalists rather than the Zionists, foresee an inclusive community where male and female work together in unity and cooperation. They too reread biblical texts and later mythic works, finding in the Kabbalah's images of the female aspect of the deity sources of self-understanding that reinforce their hope for inclusion.

Both Zionists and Jewish feminists who embrace the pessimistic view of human nature anticipate a redemptive community composed of like-minded members. Political programs seeking to constitute such communities differ according to their myths concerning human impulses. Some advocate a violence in establishing independence; others seek a more pacifistic ideal. Yet each group imagines a new social order that will affirm its distinct identity and its right to maintain this distinctiveness. Universalists portray a strikingly contrary ideal. The new world order of harmony and inclusion that they imagine builds on their hopes for progress and the utilization of the best in human nature. They often describe a tolerant, progressive, and open society as the ultimate achievement of an enlightened humanity.

Many Jews, especially those in the United States of America, are caught between the two modern myths. The American civil myth ostensibly supports tolerance, diversity, and inclusion. It considers progress and the compassionate nature of humanity as building blocks in creating an open society. The myth of the Nazi Holocaust, however, and the celebratory myth of Zionism introduce a pessimistic note into American Jewry's self-understanding. Accepting these myths creates a tension with the civil religion that is difficult for modern Jews to resolve. The modern myths of universalism and particularism, of optimistic and pessimistic conceptions of human nature, and of exclusive versus inclusive communities compete for the allegiance of these Jews.

Many who feel this tension sense it only dimly; others externalize it as the result of political or psychological factors. Whatever the explanation, the tension itself has led to a mythic expression. Jewish writers beginning in the nineteenth century and continuing through the fiction and poetry produced by contemporary Jewish authors in Israel, the United States, and in Europe, portray Jews alienated from themselves. Jews who were "banished from their father's table" and have not found themselves at home in the non-Jewish world symbolize the chaos of modern experience.[55] The myth of the Jew as a displaced person, buffeted by the winds of sexual, social, and political confusion, reappears in the novels, poetry, theology, and even scholarship of modern Jewish writers.

This mythic complex parallels even as it replaces earlier mythic constructs of Judaism, and it, like its predecessors, points forward to new myths as yet uncharted by scholarship. While modern Jewish myth appears strikingly different from its predecessors, in fact it displays the same characteristics that they do, in particular the transformation of logos into myth and myth into logos made explicit in previous mythic writing. The biblical stories of creation, rituals associated with revelation, and the messianic epics cast a competition of ideas into mythic vocabulary, yet cannot disguise the ideological conflicts they embody. Rabbinic myths elicit varied interpretations because they make the psychological and political diversity of their times transparent. Medieval philosophers and mystics translated their rival systems of thought into myth, making the myth a champion of their philosophy. The modern use of Jewish myth, whether to defend excluded members of the Jewish community or to transform Jewish national consciousness, not only fits into the paradigms established by earlier expressions of Jewish mythology but makes those paradigms more explicit and self-conscious.

S. Daniel Breslauer

Notes

[1] Mircea Eliade, *Myth and Reality*, William R. Trask, ed. (New York: 1963), pp. 1–2, 139–193.

[2] Ibid., p. 145.

[3] "The Structural Study of Myth," in his *Structural Anthropology* (New York, 1963), pp. 204–231.

[4] See Albert Spaulding Cook, *Myth and Language* (Bloomington, 1980), and Philip Wheelwright, "The Semantic Approach to Myth," in Thomas A. Sebeok, ed., *Myth: A Symposium* (Bloomington, 1968), pp. 154–168.

[5] Umberto Eco, *The Limits of Interpretation* (Bloomington, 1990), p. 21.

[6] See Maurice Olender, *The Languages of Paradise: Race, Religion and Philology in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1992), and Robert A. Segal, "In Defense of Mythology: The History of Modern Theories of Myth," in *Annals of Scholarship* 1:1, 1980, pp. 3–49.

[7] See Yehezkel Kaufmann, *The Religion of Israel: From Its Beginnings to the Babylonian Exile* (Chicago, 1960), pp. 77, 244, 316.

[8] H.A. Frankfort, John A. Wilson, and Thordild Jacobsen, *Before Philosophy: The Intellectual Adventure of Ancient Man* (Baltimore, 1949), pp. 15–16.

[9] See Ignac Goldziher, *Mythology among the Hebrews and Its Historical Development* (New York, 1967).

[10] See Frank Moore Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic: Essays in the History of the Religion of Israel* (Cambridge, 1973), and Theodor Hiebert, *Yahwist's Landscape: Nature and Religion in Early Israel* (New York, 1996), p. 80.

[11] See S. Daniel Breslauer, *Martin Buber on Myth: An Introduction* (New York, 1990).

[12] John L. McKenzie, "Myth and the Old Testament," in his *Myths and Realities: Studies in Biblical Theology* (London, 1963), pp. 182–200.

[13] See Jonathan Z. Smith, "The Unknown God: Myth in History," in his *Imagining Religion: From Babylon to Jonestown* (Chicago, 1982), pp. 66–89.

[14] Elie Wiesel, "Myth and History," in Alan M. Olson, ed., *Myth, Symbol, and Reality* (Notre Dame, 1980), pp. 20–30.

[15] See Gilbert Cuthbertson, *Political Myth and Epic* (East Lansing, 1975), and Christopher G. Flood, *Political Myth: A Theoretical Introduction* (New York, 1996).

[16] See the discussion in Richard J. Golsan, *Rene Girard and Myth: An Introduction* (New York, 1993); the analysis in James Williams, *The Bible, Violence and the Sacred: The Liberation from the Myth of Sanctioned Violence* (San Francisco, 1991); and the primary writings in Rene Girard, *Things Hidden since the Foundation of the World* (Stanford, 1987), and his *The Scapegoat* (Baltimore, 1986).

[17] See his *The Forgotten Language: An Introduction to the Understanding of Dreams, Fairy Tales and Myths* (New York, 1951); *The Dogma of Christ and Other Essays on Psychology, Religion, and Culture* (New York, 1963), and *You Shall Be As Gods: A Radical Interpretation of the Old Testament and its Tradition* (New York, 1966).

[18] Loyal D. Rue, *Amythia: Crisis in the Natural History of Western Culture* (Tuscaloosa, 1989).

[19] Roland Barthes, *Mythologies* (London, 1993).

[20] See Galit Hasan-Rokem, "Myth," in Arthur A. Cohen and Paul Mendes-Flohr, eds., *Contemporary Jewish Religious Thought: Original Essays on Critical Concepts, Movements, and Belief* (New York), pp. 657–661.

[21] See Susan A. Handelman, *Fragments of Redemption: Jewish Thought and Literary Theory in Benjamin, Scholem, and Levinas* (Bloomington, 1991).

[22] Emmanuel Levinas, *In the Time of the Nations* (Bloomington, 1994), p. 168.

[23] Emmanuel Levinas, *Nine Talmudic Readings* (Bloomington, 1994), p. 94.

[24] Even this terminology immediately raises questions. The first two terms describe texts: the Bible and so-called "Rabbinic literature." While more genuinely "chronological," the other terms represent a peculiarly Western European view of history.

[25] See Walter Beltz, *God and the Gods: Myths*

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[26] See Dorothy Irvin, *Mytharion: The Comparison of Tales from the Old Testament with the Ancient Near East* (Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1978).

[27] See Edmund Leach, *Genesis as Myth and Other Essays* (London, 1969), and Howard Eilberg-Schwartz, *The Savage in Judaism: An Anthropology of Israelite Religion and Ancient Judaism* (Bloomington, 1990).

[28] Michael A. Fishbane, *Text and Texture: Close Readings of Selected Biblical Texts* (New York, 1979).

[29] See Peter Ochs, ed., *The Return to Scripture in Judaism and Christianity: Essays in Postcritical Scriptural Interpretation* (New York, 1993).

[30] See his *The Creation of Woman* (New York, 1960), especially his conclusions, pp. 141–148.

[31] W. Robertson Smith, *The Religion of the Semites: The Fundamental Institutions* (New York, 1972), pp. 312–387.

[32] Mary Douglas, "The Abominations of Leviticus," in her *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (Baltimore, 1966), pp. 54–72 and especially p. 63.

[33] See Daniel Boyarin, *Intertextuality and the Reading of Midrash* (Bloomington, 1990), and David Stern, *Parables in Midrash: Narrative and Exegesis in Rabbinic Literature* (Cambridge, 1991).

[34] See Jacob Neusner, *A History of the Jews in Babylonia* (Leiden, 1966–1970), and his *There We Sat Down: The Story of Classical Judaism in the Period in which It Was Taking Shape* (Nashville, 1972).

[35] See Kaufmann Kohler, "Abba Father: Title of Spiritual Leader and Saint," in *JQR* 13: 1901, pp. 567–580.

[36] *The Religious Imagination: A Study in Psychoanalysis and Jewish Theology* (Boston, 1968), p. 147.

[37] See Michael Fishbane, *The Kiss of God: Spiritual and Mystical Death in Judaism* (Seattle, 1994).

[38] See Herbert Basser, "Boyarin's Intertextuality and the Reading of Midrash," in *JQR* ns. 81:3–4, p. 432.

[39] See Jacob Neusner, William Scott Green, and Ernest S. Frerichs, eds., *Judaisms and Their Messiahs at the Turn of the Christian Century* (New York, 1987).

[40] See Meir Benayahu, "Kabbalah and Halakha: A Confrontation," [Heb] in *Daat: A Journal of Jewish Philosophy and Kabbalah* 5.1980, pp. 61–115.

[41] See Gershom G. Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* (New York, 1963), pp. 34–38, and his *On the Kabbalah and Its Symbolism* (New York, 1965), pp. 87–117.

[42] See Yehuda Liebes, *Studies in Jewish Myth and Jewish Messianism* (Albany, 1993), and his *Studies in the Zohar* (Albany, 1993); Elliot R. Wolfson, *Through A Speculum that Shines: Vision and Imagination in Medieval Jewish Mysticism* (Princeton, 1994); and his *Circle in the Square: Studies in the Use of Gender in Kabbalistic Symbolism* (New York, 1995).

[43] See Robert Bonfil, "Preaching as Mediation between Elite and Popular Cultures: The Case of Judah Del Bene," in David B. Ruderman, ed., *Preachers of the Italian Ghetto* (Berkeley, 1992), pp. 67–88.

[44] See David Novak, "Are Philosophical Proofs of the Existence of God Theologically Meaningful?," in Seymour Siegel and Elliot Gertel, eds., *God in the Teachings of Conservative Judaism* (New York, 1985), pp. 188–200.

[45] See the essays collected in David Novak and Norbert Samuelson, eds., *Creation and the End of Days: Judaism and Scientific Cosmology* (Lanham, 1986).

[46] See Gerson D. Cohen, "The Soteriology of R. Abraham Maimuni," and "Messianic Postures of Ashkenazim and Sephardim," in his *Studies in the Variety of Rabbinic Cultures* (Philadelphia, 1991), pp. 209–242 and 271–297.

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[48] See the intriguing essay by Geoffrey Bennington, "Mosaic Fragment: If Derrida were an Egyptian," in David Wood, ed., *Derrida: A Critical Reader* (Oxford, 1992), pp. 97–119.

[49] See David C. Jacobson, *Modern Midrash: The Retelling of Traditional Jewish Narratives by Twentieth Century Hebrew Writers* (Albany, 1987).

[50] See Menachem M. Kellner, "Messianic Postures in Israel Today," in *ModJud* 6. 1986, pp. 197–289.

[51] See Laurence J. Silberstein, "Others Within and Others Without: Rethinking Jewish Identity and Culture," in Laurence J. Silberstein and Robert L. Cohn, eds., *The Other in Jewish Thought and History: Constructions of Jewish Culture and Identity* (New York, 1994), pp. 1–34.

[52] See Howard Eilberg-Schwartz and Wendy Doniger, eds., *Off With Her Head! The Denial of Women's Identity in Myth, Religion, and Culture* (Berkeley, 1995).

[53] See Jacob Neusner, *Stranger at Home: Zionism, "The Holocaust," and American Judaism* (Chicago, 1981).

[54] See Peter J. Haas, *Morality after Auschwitz: The Radical Challenge of the Nazi Ethic* (Philadelphia, 1988).

[55] See Alan Mintz, *Banished from Their Father's Table: Loss of Faith and Hebrew Autobiography* (Bloomington, 1989).

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Natural Science, Judaism and

The familiarity of names such as Freud, Einstein, and Feynman suggests that, since the latter half of the nineteenth century, Jews have been at the forefront of scientific advancement. Almost one hundred Jews have been awarded Nobel prizes in chemistry, physics, and medicine. This is 20% of these prizes, far out of proportion to the number of Jews in the world's population. Nobel prizes, however, mark only individual success, leaving us to inquire whether the extraordinary achievements of some Jews, most of whom had little knowledge of or attachment to Judaism, reflect anything of the value placed by Judaism on inquiry into the physical world. Is there, that is to say, any connection between Jewish thought and scientific discovery?

The Bible and Natural Science

In answering this question, we must be aware, first of all, that today's concept of "natural science" is a product of the modern era. Only relatively recently has science, an organized observational discipline, been separated from philosophy, on the one hand, and from magic, on the other. Indeed, some areas of investigation, such as psychology and the social sciences, are still struggling to extricate themselves from this pre-modern inheritance. To comprehend the roots of later attitudes to the natural world, we begin with the Bible. For, in contrast with later Jewish and Christian texts, the Hebrew Scriptures, other than in a few late passages, do not support a dualism of body and spirit and consequently do not disparage the material world as such. Even in the historically late opening chapter of Genesis, nature—that is, the material world—is affirmed as God's creation, therefore good. This attitude is fully borne out in hymns such as Ps. 104.

The Scottish theologian Thomas Torrance has argued that the Hebrew Scriptures' monistic world-view is more conducive to scientific progress than the "Greek" dualism of body and spirit that, he maintains, pervades Greek and Roman thought.[1] This may be so but cannot explain modern Jews' disproportionate contribution to scientific endeavor. This is because all pre-modern forms of Judaism exhibit the dualism of body and soul missing from Scripture; some of them—particularly the Kabbalistic forms—are almost Gnostic in contrasting the evil of the material world with the goodness of the world of spirit.

Most of the Bible—Ecclesiastes is unclear on the point—assumes that the world was designed and created by God and that it is run by God who every now and then intervenes directly to make sure that the divine purposes, for instance bringing the Israelites out of Egypt, are fulfilled. This concept of design, or purpose, harmonized well enough with Aristotelian science, which was teleological, but has been increasingly questioned by philosophers at least since Descartes and is no longer a useful scientific hypothesis. The concept of an intervening God ready to pull miracles out of a hat to save the chosen people runs counter not only to mechanistic science but scarcely less so to the probabilistic science of the twentieth century, and, for quite different reasons, it was undermined by reflection on the Holocaust.

The Bible's hostility to magic is noteworthy but does not necessarily denote denial of magic's reality and efficacy; this was to become a major point in the controversies of the Maimunists and anti-Maimunists in the Middle Ages. The omission from Gen. 1 of all reference to demons and other nonnatural beings is perhaps the closest the Bible comes to outright denial of their existence.

Proto-Science—The Classification of Phenomena

The biblical approach to the natural world is not restricted to an appreciation of its order and beauty or the power or wisdom of its creator. From time to time, there is in addition strong evidence of systematic thought, of attempts to classify phenomena and to evaluate their relationships. The creation scheme of Gen. 1, for instance, is well-ordered and hierarchical, reflecting and perpetuating structures of the society that produced it. Some modern commentators—we refer below to Rosenzweig—discover in it a dynamic quality, of movement from chaos to order, culminating in divine perfection on the seventh day. But it can just as well be read as a story of the already perfect God's creating a perfect, static universe, inhabited by distinct and immutable species in fixed hierarchical relationships with one another.

A carefully devised classification of the natural order also underlies the ordered lists of birds, beasts, and sundry creatures in Lev. 11 and Deut. 18. Mary Douglas has drawn attention to the sophistication of these lists and to the fact that the creatures forbidden for consumption are precisely those that appear anomalous in this classification, which she relates to that of Gen. 1. "Proper" animals are domesticated (cow, sheep, goat), and they chew the cud and have cloven hooves; but the camel and the pig are anomalous, for they lack these characteristics.[2] Similarly, Lev. 13 presents a systematic description of "leprosy" that can only be the result of careful and extended observation.

On the other hand, despite its numerous illuminating references to natural phenomena, Job rarely transcends the merely descriptive, as in chapter 28 on mining, and chapters 38–41, where God overwhelms Job with awesome descriptions of everything from the crocodile to the Pleiades but considers him incapable of appreciating a coherent taxonomy. The Bible thus not only repeatedly affirms the wonder and wisdom of the natural world but, from time to time, incorporates and in some ways transforms the available science. As we shall now see, these features persist in Rabbinic Judaism.

The Talmud—Science Subordinated to Religion

Since the late nineteenth century several studies have been made of natural science—especially medicine and mathematics—in the Talmud and Midrash. These studies must be regarded with caution, since they typically predate or ignore modern scholarship on the formation of Rabbinic texts, they impose modern notions of natural science on the rabbis, and they generalize on the basis of limited or ambiguous evidence. Beyond these methodological problems, it is clear that, even if some of the rabbis possessed scientific knowledge, the redactors of the Rabbinic works did not, and, consequently, scientific observations were likely to be omitted or at least mangled in transmission. Additionally, particularly outside Babylonia through most of the period under consideration, "Rabbinic" Jews were a minority among Jews. No one knows what most other Jews were doing, whether they were competent astronomers or physicians or what part they played in mediating such scientific knowledge as was possessed by the rabbis.

Despite these caveats, the Rabbinic literature does illuminate the rabbis' general perspective, in which the sciences, while not disparaged, were treated as ancillary to Jewish law. Thus M. Ab. 3:23 reads: "R. Eleazar Hisma said, 'The sacrifices of birds and the counting of days of purification for menstruants are major topics of law; [the calculation of] seasons and geometry [*gematriyot*] are [mere] byways of wisdom.'"

The rabbis believed that Scripture was both inerrant and comprehensive; it con-

tained all knowledge and was the source of all truth. It thus worried them that some useful knowledge, such as that of astronomy and medicine, appeared to originate elsewhere. Further, having contrived an opposition between Greek (bad) and Jew (good), they resisted acknowledging any debt to Greek learning. So they insisted that all knowledge of created things was divinely revealed and that other nations had "borrowed" this knowledge from the Jews. The third century Palestinian Amora Yohanan accordingly interpreted Deut. 4:6—"For this is your wisdom and understanding in the eyes of the nations"—as referring to Jewish pre-eminence in astronomical calculation (B. Shab. 75a). Similarly, the rabbis understood medical remedies to be recorded in a book of cures concealed by Hezekiah (see below) and hence to be of "Jewish" origin, and they frequently read "facts" of nature into biblical verses.

But the rabbis' observations on nature are rarely original and not always sound. By the Middle Ages, Jewish physicians therefore abandoned Rabbinic medicine in favor of Hippocrates and Galen. Later, in the early modern period, Rabbinic cosmology too proved embarrassing. Yet other Rabbinic observations were not known to be erroneous until more recently, for instance, that lice are not generated spontaneously from sweat or dirt[3] or that mushrooms are not nourished from the soil (B. Ber. 40b). Some aggadic statements on nature are presumably not meant to be taken literally, but where is the line to be drawn? Did the rabbis really think there was a river, Sambatyon, that hurled great stones throughout the week and rested on the Sabbath (Midrash Tanhuma Warsaw edition, *Kī Tissa* 33)?

Astronomy in the Talmud

The third century Babylonian Amora Samuel claimed extensive knowledge of medicine and astronomy. He had a reputation for eye salves (B. Shab. 108b) and asserted that he had remedies for all bad eating habits except three (B. B.M. 113b). He also declared: "The paths of heaven are as familiar to me as the streets of Nehardea" (B. Ber. 58b). Even so, as he left no pharmacopoeia, no star atlas, nor a map of Nehardea, it is impossible to assess any of these claims. Samuel calculated the *tekufa*—the average period between solstice and equinox, or precisely a quarter of the solar year—at 91 days and 7 1/2 hours (B. Erub. 56a). This coincides with the length of the Julian year, and, because it is inaccurate, the Jewish festivals now occur on average almost two weeks later in the year than they should. A more accurate figure of 91 days, 7 hours, 28 minutes, 51.34 seconds is attributed by Jewish scholars from about the tenth century to Samuel's contemporary Adda bar Ahava. This value is close to that given by Hipparchus in the second century B.C.E., but it is not mentioned in the Talmud, and the link with Adda bar Ahava is spurious.[4] If Samuel's estimate of the *tekufa* were correct, it would recur at the same moment of the same day in the week once every twenty eight years. The recurrence of this "great cycle" is marked by the ceremony of *qiddush ha-hama* ("sanctification of the sun"), when, it was thought, the sun, moon, stars, and constellations were in the relative positions they occupied at creation (B. Ber. 59a, as explained by Rashi).

A "small cycle" of nineteen years, though not mentioned in the Talmud, is basic to the harmonization of the solar and lunar calendars. Outside Rabbinic literature, it is known as the Metonic cycle, after the fifth century B.C.E. Greek astronomer Meton, who noticed that nineteen solar years equal almost exactly 235 lunar months. Meton thus assumed the same length for the solar year as Samuel. It is probable that the *tekufa* attributed to Adda bar Ahava was arrived at by the simple expedient of dividing 235 lunations by nineteen to establish the length of the solar year and dividing that by four.

M. A.Z. 3:1 rules that a statue (in human form) with a ball in its hand must be assumed to be an idol. On this, Y. A.Z. 18b comments:

> "A ball," because the world is made like a ball. R. Jonah said, "When Alexander of Macedon wanted to ascend, he went up, and up, and up, until he saw the world like a ball and the sea like a dish; that is why they sculpted him with a ball in his hand."

> Then [why not] picture him with a dish in his hand? He ruled over the earth only, but the Holy One, blessed be he, rules also over the sea *and* the dry land.

This is frequently cited as evidence that the rabbis—at least, the Palestinians—knew that the earth was a sphere. It would not be surprising, in the aftermath of the Alexandrian astronomer Ptolemy (90–168) and several centuries after Aristotle had demonstrated the sphericity of the earth (*De caelo* 2.13), if they did. However, the image of a ball floating in a dish of water does not fit; if the rabbis had clearly understood the concept of a spherical earth they would have imagined a ball part water, part earth, not a dish; nor does the "dish" image fit the notion of the spherical earth floating in the "lower waters" of creation. The common treatment of this subject exemplifies a misreading of Rabbinic sources for apologetic reasons, in this case to demonstrate that the rabbis got their science right. Much less ambiguous are numerous aggadic statements implying that the earth is flat (for instance, B. Pes. 93b–94; B. Hag. 12b; B. Tam. 32a); but these are "explained away" or ignored by the apologists.

Comets are discussed in the Talmud, but even Samuel conceded he did not understand them (B. Ber. 58a). One that appeared every seventy years is mentioned and has inevitably been identified with Halley's, though it is unclear why it should mislead mariners, who presumably would not mistake it for a star. Possibly what is meant is a nova or supernova, not a comet at all; that would not appear at regular intervals, but somebody might have thought it did.

Medicine and Biology in the Talmud

The Babylonian Talmud contains several collections of remedies introduced by the third century teacher Abayye with the words "my mother told me"—an attribution to be taken not at its face value but as editorial semantics for "popular tradition." Some of the remedies are common-sense, as, for instance, to turn the seam of a baby's swaddling cloth outwards so as not to cause injury (B. Shab. 134a) Others concern the formulae and repetition of spells (B. Shab. 66b), and many relate to diet (B. Ket. 10b) or the correct use of plants and herbs.

Alongside such folk medicines, demons, possession, and the evil eye—notably absent from the Hebrew scriptures—figure commonly in Rabbinic literature. In recent years, numerous Hebrew amulets and incantation bowls from the first to fifth centuries have been recovered, many of them written by non-Jews evidently hoping to capture the efficacy of "Jewish magic," held in high repute in late antiquity.[5] Still, a more scientific attitude to medicine and healing clearly always prevailed in some circles. Even with regard to amulets, the Talmud distinguishes between those regarded as tested and reliable and those not so regarded (B. Shab. 53a-b), a distinction that presupposes a modicum of experiment and observation.

Several scholars in modern times, following the pioneering work of Julius Preuss (1861–1913),[6] have discussed Talmudic anatomy and physiology. This is not an easy exercise, for no Talmudic treatise concerns either of these subjects. To assess Talmudic anatomy, therefore, one has to work with material such as a list of body parts compiled in connection with laws of ritual purity (M. Oh. 1:8) or lists of defects that render priests or sacrificial animals unacceptable for Temple service (M. Bek. 6 and 7) or that render an animal or bird impermissible for consumption (M. Hul. 3). Such knowledge of physiology as is preserved in the Talmud has to do with matters like childbirth and sexual relations that are regulated by the law or is implied in random comments on nature, divine providence, and the like. We know very little about the actual practice of medicine by Jews in the Talmudic era, and the Talmud is concerned not with the art of medicine *per se* but with the law. Thus it has preserved only those elements of medical science needed for correct interpretation and application of the Halakhah. As Edward A. Boyden has written, "although the Mishnaic portion of the Talmud, when redacted, was contemporary with Galen, and the commentaries of the Gemara were post-Galenic, the stage of development of Talmudic medicine is nearer that of the Hippocratic school. . . ."[7]

Just as today one might learn quite a lot about issues in medical ethics from studying the law reports, but little of the relevant basic science, we are able from the Talmud to assess the rabbis' ethical presuppositions but remain in the dark as to their finer understanding of anatomy and physiology.

The Independent Status of Science in the Middle Ages

The subordination of science to Jewish law was challenged by a number of medieval philosophers, foremost among them Bahya ibn Pakuda (eleventh century Spain). Bahya picked up the biblical concept of nature as testifying to the greatness of God as creator and argued that the study of nature *per se* led to faith in its infinitely wise maker.[8]

Moses Maimonides (1135/8–1204) struggled to incorporate a duty to study natural science within his all-embracing legal system. He subsumed this work under the command to love God (Mishneh Torah, *Hilkhot Yesodei ha-Torah* 2:2):

> How does one love and fear him? When a person reflects on his works and his great and wonderful creations and perceives in them his infinite and boundless wisdom, he immediately loves, praises, glorifies and fervently desires to know this great name. . . .

Then, in a fine example of the popular scientific genre of the time, Maimonides proceeds to give the reader a summary of cosmology, consisting of an account of the heavenly spheres and of the theory of the four elements. This basic science is not needed for the implementation of any specific law, unlike the principles of medicine and the details of calendrical calculation that Maimonides includes respectively under the laws on self-preservation and the determination of the new moon. It is an end in itself, part of the contemplation on the divine mystery that to Maimonides is the ultimate human felicity and the ultimate objective of obedience to the commandments.[9]

In keeping with this attitude, Maimonides was clear that tradition alone did not impart credibility or authority to scientific claims. What could be scientifically tested should be. Thus he observed (*Guide* 3:14) that the astronomy of the rabbis was neither accurate nor authoritative, since mathematics was not fully developed in their time and their statements on these topics did not derive from prophetic revelation. He similarly was an outspoken critic of the astrology practiced by Jews in his own day, which he denounced in a letter to the rabbis of Marseilles as a pseudo-science, claiming he had carried out empirical tests on various astrological theories. In his Mishneh Torah (*Laws of Idolatry* 11:16), he formulated a general rejection of pseudo-sciences:

> And all these matters [astrology, necromancy, etc.] are falsehood and deceit, by means of which idolatrous priests in ancient times misled the people of the nations to follow them. It is not fitting that [the people of] Israel, who are wise and learned, should be attracted by such nonsense or entertain the possibility that there is any benefit in it; as it is said, "Surely there is no divination in Jacob, and no augury in Israel" (Num. 23:23), and "Those nations whose place you are taking listen to soothsayers and augurs, but the Lord your God does not permit you to do this" (Deut. 18:14). Whoever believes in such things, or anything like them, and thinks that they are true, though the Torah forbade them, is a fool, an ignoramus, and in the category of women and children whose comprehension is imperfect.

Though Maimonides was preceded in his rejection of astrology by Bahya ibn Pakuda and, half-heartedly, by Judah Halevi, his enlightened view convinced few scholars in his time and had virtually no impact on popular belief. Even the Vilna Gaon sharply criticized him for denying the existence of demons.[10] Today some orthodox leaders still endorse such beliefs, as well as astrology, on the grounds that they were held by the rabbis of the Talmud.

Astronomy, Astrology, Mathematics, Physics in the Middle Ages

The need to calculate the calendar forced Jews to engage in astronomy, and since, despite their pretentions, they really had no indigenous tradition, to accomplish this, they were obliged to work with Muslims and

Christians. The result was that they not only acted as translators, assisting in the transmission of Indian and Arab astronomy to the West, but made original contributions, in the compilation of tables, in observation, and in the design of astronomical instruments.

By means of their Hebrew or Latin translations of the Arabic translations, commentaries, and compilations of Ptolemy's *Almagest*, Jews contributed to the transmission of Arabic-language science to scholastic Europe and hence to the renaissance. One of the first Hebrew translations of the Arabic version of the *Almagest* was made by Jacob Anatoli between the years 1231 and 1235. Ibn Aflah's *Kitab al-Hayd* ("The Book of Astronomy"), important for its critical appraisal of the Ptolemaic system, was translated into Hebrew by Moses ibn Tibbon in 1274.

Translation of ancient learning from Greek into Arabic (sometimes via Syriac), then into Hebrew and from Hebrew into Latin, was unlikely to preserve the original author's intentions. But while Europeans were busy rediscovering Greek, several Arabic essays were translated directly by Jews into European languages, especially Latin and Spanish. These constituted a major vehicle for the progress of astronomy. For instance, in 1256, Judah b. Moses ha-Kohen of Toledo translated into Spanish Abd al-Rahman al-Sufi's *Book of the Stars* under the title *Libro de las figuras* and Ibn Abu al-Rijal's astrological treatise *Kitab al-Barie* under the title *Libro complido*.

Similarly, the heretic Jew Sind ibn Ali (829–833) was a principal contributor to the astronomical tables of Caliph Maimun. Before 1136, Abraham bar Hiyya compiled a set of tables based on the calculations of the Arab Al-Battani (d. 929). Abraham ibn Ezra (1092–1167), Isaac Israeli (ninth to tenth century), and several other Hebrew authors compiled astronomical tables, and twelve Jewish astronomers, under the leadership of the Cordovan astronomer, Ibn Arzarkali (Azarchel), helped to compile the Toledo Tables in the twelfth century.

The famous "Alphonsine Tables" were prepared in Toledo for King Alfonso X of León and Castile under the direction of the Jewish astronomers Judah ben Moses ha-Cohen and Isaac ibn Sa'id. Completed in 1252, these tables were based on the geocentric Ptolemaic theory and enabled astronomers to calculate eclipses and the positions of the planets for any given moment. They were an important source of information for Copernicus, whose own work superseded theirs in the 1550s. Among many other sets of tables drawn up by Jewish astronomers were those by Levi ben Gershom (1288–1344) and by Abraham Zacuto (ca. 1452–1515), whose tables and *Almanach Perpetuum* in Latin and Spanish were used by Columbus on his voyages.

Observations and Inventions in the Middle Ages

Astronomy was an important science that involved many Jewish scholars of the middle ages. The *B'raita diShmuel* or *Sod ha-'ibbur*, which deals with the principles of intercalating the calendar, is regarded by some as the first original Hebrew work on astronomy in the Middle Ages. Pseudonymously attributed to the Amora Samuel, it was compiled no earlier than the ninth century and applies Arab astronomy to Jewish calendrical problems. Another Jew, Mashaallah (ca. 800), whose Hebrew name was possibly Joab or Joel, served the caliphs in Baghdad. His essay on lunar eclipses, astral conjunctions, and seasons of the year is preserved in Hebrew. The ninth century Persian Jewish astronomer Andruzager b. Zadi Faruch may be identical with Eliezer b. Faruch, to whom the eleventh century Arab chronologist al-Biruni attributed the fixing of the Jewish calendar.

In Spain, Abraham bar Hiyya, in addition to his astronomical calendars and Latin translations of Arabic astrological works, wrote several original books. Those that were translated into Latin had a significant influence on the development of European science. Abraham ibn Ezra, though devoted to astrology, wrote several astronomical works, some of which describe types of astrolabes. The handwritten notes of Isaac ibn Sa'id (of Alphonsine table fame) on his observations of lunar eclipses are still extant.

In 1310, Isaac ben Joseph Israeli com-

posed *Yesod Olam*, a study of astronomy and cosmography, incorporating an original method for calculating the parallax of the moon. He also wrote *Sha'ar ha-Shamayim* on periods and seasons and *Sefer Sha'ar ha-Millu'im* on the movement of the planets, their order, and positions.

Gersonides (Levi ben Gershom, or Ralbag; 1288–1344) devoted the first section of the fifth book of his philosophical treatise *Milhamot Adonai* ("Wars of the Lord") to astronomy. He explains in detail his discovery, or improvement, of the cross-staff, a device for measuring angles and spherical distances, which became known in Europe as *baculus Jacobi* ("Jacob's staff"), and he describes his method of passing a light ray from a star through a small aperture in a darkened chamber on to a board—the first recorded use of the *camera obscura*. Among his achievements was the measurement of the relationship of the diameters of the sun and the moon to the lengths of their apparent orbits and the relationship between the parts of the surfaces covered during an eclipse and the size of the total area. This led him, in chapter 9, to reject some of the basic assumptions of the Ptolemaic system. Part of the book was translated into Latin in 1342.

Other Jewish inventors of astronomical instruments in the later Middle Ages include Jacob ben Machir, who invented an improved quadrant, for measuring angles; Isaac ben Solomon ben Zaddik al Hadib, who invented a new instrument that was a combination of astrolabe and quadrant; and Jacob (Bonet) de Lattes (fifteenth to sixteenth centuries), who designed a device in the shape of a ring for measuring the height of the sun and the stars. Zacuto improved the astrolabe.[11]

The Zohar on the Earth's Shape

Several scholars have repeated the erroneous claim that "some 250 years before Copernicus the Zohar stated that 'the whole earth spins in a circle like a ball; the one part is up when the other part is down; the one part is light when the other is dark, it is day in the one part and night in the other.'"[12] What the text actually says is (*Zohar Vayiqra* 10a):

> It is further explained in the book of Rav Hamnuna the Elder that the whole *yishuv* [the inhabited part of the earth] is round like a ball,[13] some below and some above, and all these creatures are of different appearance because [they live in] different climates. . . .
>
> So there is a place in the *yishuv*, that when it is light for these it is dark for those, when it is day for these it is night for those, and there is a place where it is all day and there is no night except for a brief moment.

So far as the effects of longitude are concerned, this statement of the Zohar does not go beyond the much earlier, well-known statements of Jewish authorities such as Judah Halevi (Kuzari 2:20) and Zerahia Halevi of Gerona.[14] However, the Zohar introduces a gratuitous error by inventing "a place where it is all day and there is no night except for a brief moment," overlooking the fact that in those latitudes in which daylight is constant for part of the year, darkness is constant at other times.

Hasdai Crescas (1340–1412) on Physics

In his *Or Hashem* (1410), the Spanish Jewish philosopher Hasdai Crescas concedes the eternity of the world and sacrifices human free will to natural causality. At the same time, he rejects the *via negativa* in theology and "denies that man's true perfection and ultimately human immortality are to be gained by intellectual development, and makes goodness, rather than thought, the central attribute of the deity."[15]

Crescas attempts to undermine Aristotelian philosophy by disproving Aristotle's physics.[16] He

> answers Aristotle's proofs of the impossibility of an infinite magnitude, an infinite place, or a vacuum. He rejects Aristotle's definition of time: his definition of place: the theory that two elements, fire and air, are endowed with an absolute lightness that causes them to rise, and the theory that all four physical elements have their proper natural places . . . is the cause of their natural motion. The drift of Crescas' critique is toward a conception of infinite space, with the possibility of infinite worlds, and the uniformity of nature.[17]

But this summary by Davidson overlooks the most revolutionary aspect of Crescas' natural philosophy, his assertion that the heavens and earth are subject to the same system of natural law.[18]

Crescas was read by Pico della Miranda and directly influenced Spinoza. Some of his ideas are similar to those for which Giordano Bruno was burned at the stake; both of them may have been indebted to fourteenth century Parisian scholastics.[19]

Medicine and Biology in the Middle Ages

A systematic scientific approach to medicine appears in Jewish sources only in the Middle Ages, when the influence of the Hippocratic School and Galen is prominent. The earliest known medical works written by a Jew are the Arabic treatises of Isaac Israeli (ca. 855–955). The *Book of Asaph* or *Book of Healing*, of which several versions exist, is the oldest Hebrew medical treatise, cited in some form perhaps as early as the tenth century.[20] Asaph the Physician, the supposed author, to whom a version of the Hippocratic oath[21] subsequently in use by Jewish physicians is attributed, cannot be identified. The book—at least in one manuscript—contains "treatises on the Persian months, physiology, embryology, the four periods of man's life, the four winds [that is, humors], diseases of various organs, hygiene, medicinal plants, medical calendar, the practice of medicine, as well as an antidotarium, urinology, aphorisms, and the Hippocratic oath."[22] It is interesting that it draws not on the ample medical material in the Talmud but on "the books of the wise men of India" and a "book of the ancients." It ascribes the origin of medicine to Shem, son of Noah, who received it from angels. The contents clearly show dependence on Galen, Hippocrates, and Dioscorides, indicating that the practice of Jewish physicians was modeled not on Rabbinic sources but on "scientific" medicine.

Many Greek medical works were translated into Hebrew, generally from Arabic rather than the original language and often with the commentaries of leading medieval Muslim scholars. Opinions vary as to the originality of Jewish contributions to medicine, but there is no doubt that Jews played a significant role in the transfer of ancient Greek medical knowledge, together with later Islamic insights, to the west during the renaissance. Sadly, the great European universities formed at that time excluded Jews, so that although many individual Jews acquired medical knowledge and gained high reputations for their skills, only converted Jews such as Amatus Lusitanus[23] were able to play a full part in the development of the science before modern times.

But the systematic scientific approach created problems for traditionalists, since it rejected folk elements and superstitions included in the Talmud. Maimonides, in the short regimen of health he includes as a single chapter in his Mishneh Torah (*Hilkhot Deot* 4), casts aside tradition in favor of Galen and his own contemporaries. The remark of the commentator *Migdal Oz* that "everything in the chapter is based on principles derived from the sages and scattered through the Talmud" is wide of the mark. The truth is that Maimonides did not believe the sages had an adequate knowledge of medicine or that such knowledge could be obtained by the investigation of traditional texts. The Torah taught not the details of medical science but rather that one should seek the best advice obtainable from whatever source it might come.

The Theological Approach to Healing

Jewish theology understands God to be all-powerful, merciful, and compassionate, God's providence extending to all creatures. Presumably, then, individuals who are sick and suffer do so not by accident but by God's design, whether on account of sin or in some way to refine them. This being the case, Jews pray to God to seek forgiveness and, if it is God's will, healing. This raises an important issue: if it is not God's will to heal, then, by utilizing the art of medicine to heal ourselves, do we not thwart God's will? If, for instance, God purposely "creates" an individual with a defective kidney,

do we not circumvent God's will by replacing it with a healthy one or by offering dialysis? As a result of such thinking, some Karaites objected to the practice of medicine. Nahmanides (1194–1270) likewise held that God would protect from sickness any individual who served God in complete faith and that, ideally, the sick person should turn to repentance not to doctors, even though the Torah granted "permission for the doctor to heal" (commentary on Lev. 26:11).

The Talmud relates that Hezekiah, king of Judah, took six initiatives without consulting the sages; *post factum* they approved of three but not of the others (B. Ber. 10b and parallels). Among those they did approve was his initiative in hiding away the *sefer refuot* ("book of cures"). Most commentators assume that the book listed herbs God had created to cure each and every human malady. Hezekiah hid the book, explains Rashi, "because their heart was not humbled for the sick but they were healed immediately," that is, because the certainty of cure led people to ignore God. Maimonides, to whom it was inconceivable that the sages should approve of the deliberate suppression of beneficial medical information or resources, rejects this explanation. In his opinion, the book contained cures forbidden by the Torah, such as astrological talismans. To leave it around would have been positively dangerous; moreover, the "cures" were worthless (commentary on M. Pes. 4, end).

The predominant Jewish view is indeed that endorsed by Maimonides, that the practice of medicine is not only permissible but virtuous. That the art of medicine is licit is inferred in the Talmud from the rules of compensation for injury: a malefactor must compensate the victim for pain, injury, shame, loss of earnings, and medical care, which indicates that doctors are allowed to practice (B. B.Q. 85a). Similarly, Joseph Karo (1488–1575), in his *Shulhan Arukh* (*Yore Deah* 236:1), states, ". . .[to heal] is a positive obligation, tantamount to the saving of life, and one who avoids doing it sheds blood, even though there is someone else available to [effect the cure], since the patient does not respond equally to every doctor;" one may practice medicine only if duly authorized by a Jewish religious court.

David ben Samuel ha Levi (1586–1667) expressed theologically the relationship between "permission" to heal and the "obligation" to heal (Taz, on *Shulhan Arukh Yore Deah* 236:1):

> True healing is through prayer, for healing is from heaven, as it is written, "I have smitten, and I shall heal" (Deut. 32:39). But not everyone is worthy of this [special divine intervention]; hence it is necessary to achieve healing by natural means. He, blessed be He, agreed to this, and gave healing through natural cures; this is what is meant by "He gave permission to heal." Since human beings have got into this state [of having to rely on natural cures], doctors are obliged to effect cures [by natural means].

By being subsumed within the divine commandments, the practice of medicine becomes part of the spirituality of Judaism. Nevertheless, the specific remedies used by the physician are not determined by the religious tradition itself but by the science of medicine.

Natural Science in the Early Modern Period

Jonathan Israels has demonstrated that Jews, at least in western Europe, commenced reintegration with the host societies in the mid-sixteenth century and exerted a profound influence on subsequent European cultural and economic development.[24] André Néher[25] and others have shown the extent to which Jews such as David Gans were in direct contact with some of the leading scientific minds of the age. Ephraim Kupfer argued that there was a strong current of rationalist culture and philosophical activity among German Jews in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries and that this stimulated similar interests among Polish Jews in the late sixteenth century.[26] Ruderman rightly observes, however, that the distinction between physics and metaphysics was a new feature of sixteenth century Jewish thought, reflecting an emergent consensus in Christian thought on the relationship between science and faith.

Moses Isserles (1520–72) in Cracow was "audacious"[27] in publishing a commentary on the Hebrew translation of Peurbach's

Theoricae Novae Planetorum and was put on the defensive for his "Aristotelian" ideas by the more conservative Solomon Luria (ca. 1510–1574).[28] But often one becomes aware of the clash between observational science and Jewish tradition indirectly, through a defensive posture in the Halakhah. Luria himself, for instance, discusses a group of Talmudic statements in which advice is given on the avoidance of dangerous foods or eating habits, such as eating meat and fish together. Referring also to remedies and to protective measures against demons, he writes, "There is an ancient ban of excommunication on those who rely on the cures prescribed in the Talmud. [This is so that we should] not bring the sages into disrepute, for [people] do not know that there are differences in place and in time. . . ."[29] The question of "nature's having changed" had been mooted some centuries earlier by the Tosafists (at B. M.Q. 11a, s.v., *Kavra*), but with the new Age of Discovery had become far more acute.

The Copernican Revolution

On May 24, 1543, on his death bed, Nicholas Copernicus received the first printed copy of his *De revolutionibus orbium coelestium*, completed thirteen years earlier, in which, though he was careful not to make the *substantive* claim that the earth orbited the sun, he demonstrated the mathematical elegance of calculating heavenly motions on the assumption that it did.

To what extent did Copernicus' revival of Aristarchus' heliocentric conception of the universe disturb traditional Jewish thought? Certainly, it was some time before the Copernican theory gained acceptance; as late as 1616, the Inquisition condemned Copernicus' book, and Galileo was tried in 1632. As knowledge of it spread, two problems presented themselves. The obvious one was that, in purely mathematical terms, it contradicted the Ptolemaic theory, which by this period had been incorporated into Jewish as well as Christian theology. However, what was in the long run far more serious was that it implied, as Crescas had suggested, that the stars and other "heavenly" bodies constituted a single physical system with the earth; the heavens thus were dethroned—in Max Weber's term, "disenchanted." The whole medieval fabric of a chain of being leading down from the One, through the heavenly spheres, to the earth and its lowly inhabitants, collapsed. No longer did it make sense to speak of a God who lived, literally, in the sky.

Maharal (Judah Loew ben Bezalel), responding to Azariah dei Rossi's skepticism with regard to Talmudic aggada, attempted, in his last published work (*Be'er ha-Gola*, section 6) to defend B. Pes. 94b:

> The rabbis taught: The sages of Israel say the sphere is fixed and the constellations rotate; the sages of the nations say the constellations are fixed and the sphere rotates. . . . Rabbi said, their words seem more correct than ours, since wells are cool in the day and hot at night.

Whether the passage has anything to do with the geocentric/heliocentric debate, as Maharal and others thought, is doubtful. Maharal, at any rate, remained faithful to the Rabbinic view of cosmogony, which he identifies with the Ptolemaic. For, he said—in a passage that contains the first, albeit oblique, reference to Copernicus in Hebrew—it was received by them from Moses at Sinai, who received it from God, who alone can possibly know the truth (*Netivot Olam, Netiv ha-Torah*).

In one respect, however, Maharal may have been influenced by Copernicus; he vehemently attacks Maimonides' contention that the spheres are intelligent beings (second preface to *Gevurot Hashem*), thus perhaps yielding to the pressure for "disenchantment" of the heavens. In the same passage he expounds his "double truth" theory, that the plane of spiritual reality, though generally synchronized with that of physical reality, occasionally departs from it, as in miracles such as the sun's standing still for Joshua; the "true" spiritual sun stopped, but the "mere" physical sun continued on its course.[30] This very convenient notion enables Maharal to have his cake and to eat it. Science (of the "nations") is perfectly valid and a legitimate activity but deals only with

superficial appearance, whereas Torah truth (the unique possession of Israel) deals with essences, spirituality, ultimate reality. The two cannot contradict each other because they do not really meet, and the truth of Torah, like the people of Israel, is superior and eternal.

Maharal's disciple David Gans (1541–1613) was a colleague, or at least acquaintance, of both Tycho Brahe (1546–1601), self-styled last of the astronomers, and the latter's disciple Kepler (1571–1630), designated by Brahe to clear up the few remaining details. In *Nehmad ve-Na'im* (1613), Gans offered the first Hebrew exposition of the Copernican system; like Kepler himself, he rejected its substantive implications. Unlike Maharal, he thought that truth was one.

The Cretian polymath Joseph Solomon Delmedigo (1591–1655) was a pupil of Galileo and the first Hebrew writer to use logarithms. In his *Elim* he expounds the works of al-Battani and Copernicus, apparently endorsing the latter. Tobias ben Moses Cohen, known as Tuviyyah ha-Rofé (1652–1729), "the physician", in his *Ma'aseh Tuviyyah* (Venice, 1707–1708), reviews the heliocentric view but rejects it, principally on religious and traditional grounds, denouncing Copernicus as the "first-born of Satan."[31]

The Early Modern Period—Conversos and Natural Science

Among the descendants of the *converso* Jews who remained in Spain after 1492 and Portugal after 1497 were many who achieved eminence in medicine. Among the most notable was Amatus Lusitanus (1511–1567), famous for dissecting corpses, for his work on *materia medica*, and for attending Pope Julius III. Several times accused (as a Christian) of heresy, after two peaceful years in Ragusa (Dubrovnik), he moved in 1558 to Salonika, where he openly practiced Judaism and eventually died of the plague.

The *converso* émigrés who, from the end of the sixteenth century, were able to return to Judaism in the Netherlands and elsewhere in Europe formed new and intellectually restless Jewish communities. The medical professionals among them were held in high repute for their skills. But did they contribute significantly to the scientific revolution in the field of medicine? While Josef Kaplan thinks not, David Ruderman stresses the contribution they made to shaping a new Jewish cultural identity: "Several of them even contributed to discussions of the nature of religious belief and epistemological uncertainty, even applying their own rational and naturalistic susceptibilities to a radical rereading of the biblical text and the Jewish religious tradition."[32] Ruderman specifies three in particular: Francisco (1551–1623), whose *Quod nihil scitur* (Lyons, 1581) exhibits a constructive skepticism that, critical of Aristotle, emphasizes the need for experiment,[33] and Isaac La Peyrère (1596–1676) and Baruch (Benedict) Spinoza (1632–77), who exemplify the application of scientific techniques to biblical study. Richard Popkin has argued that this, even more than Copernican cosmology, undermined the theological foundations of Judaism and Christianity.[34]

Jewish Medical Studies at Padua

It is estimated that between 1520 and 1605, 29 Jews received medical diplomas from the University of Padua, then governed by Venice; between 1617 and 1816, at least 320 Jews graduated there.[35] Many must have attended university without matriculating, and some trained at the very small number of other universities that from time to time admitted Jews. In addition to their medical training, students at Padua studied logic, philosophy, and what might nowadays be known as a liberal arts curriculum.

Among the most famous graduates were Tobias Cohen, whom we met above, Joseph Delmedigo, and Joseph Hamitz. Such men, all of whom had a thorough grounding in Jewish studies, and many of whom were rabbis, formed a distinct cultural and intellectual Jewish elite that not only bridged the gap between the Jewish and non-Jewish worlds but was uniquely placed to attempt to resolve the conflicts of science and religion.

Science and Religion in the Modern Period

Since the seventeenth century, science has conflicted with religious tradition in the following ways:

(a) Innumerable instances have arisen of scientific results contradicting statements made by religious authority.
(b) The requirement that theory be supported by reproducible experimental evidence has not only cast doubt on earlier statements on nature by religious authorities but has undermined the traditional religious method of deriving information about the world out of traditional texts.
(c) The teleology that characterized the Aristotelian understanding of nature and conveniently supported the Argument from Design, which holds that creation has a purpose, has been abandoned.

The broad result of this has been a denominational split within Judaism. The Reformist branch, established as a separate movement in the early nineteenth century for sociopolitical as well as intellectual reasons, has accepted the scientific revolution in principle, to the extent that conflicts (a) and (b) are no longer perceived as threatening; however, its theologians have not satisfactorily dealt with (c). The Orthodox range from outright denial of scientific results to a variety of accommodations and reinterpretations designed to safeguard the integrity of the traditional doctrine of *Torah min ha-Shamayim*, that is, divine revelation.[36]

One ancient strategy to preserve the Torah's authority in the face of science is to demonstrate that all science is contained in the Torah itself. Thus Pinhas Eliyahu ben Meir of Vilna, in his *Sefer ha-Brit* (Petrkow, 1913; first published 1797), offers a remarkable review of almost every branch of science, ranging from physiology to mechanics and from astronomy to meteorology—all in terms of the theory of the four elements and a geocentric Ptolemaic universe (1:7)! His stated objective is to assist people to attain the Holy Spirit; but, in that Enlightenment period, he undoubtedly intends both to demonstrate that "all is in the Torah" and that the great sages knew science before the gentiles "discovered" it. Pinhas Eliyahu may be responding to the work of the David Nieto[37] or the Jewish representatives of "physico-theology," such as the colorful Mordechai Gumpel Schnaber Levison.[38]

More recently, inevitably, the computer has been recruited in the attempt to demonstrate that everything is in the Torah. Michael Drosnin[39] reports the following method: The text of the Torah, consisting of just over 300,000 Hebrew letters, is fed into the computer, and regurgitated as a matrix of n lines, each consisting of a sequence of letters extracted from the text at intervals of n letters. Thus, 102 lines might be generated in which the first line contains the first letter, the 103rd letter and so on, and the bottom line the 102nd letter, the 204th letter, and so on. The computer then hunts for strings of letters occurring forwards or backwards, up or down, diagonally, in sequence or in intervals, anywhere in the matrix. So, for instance, when n was made equal to a certain number, a sequence comprising a possible Hebrew spelling of "Newton" occurred in one vertical line. Not far away, but in another direction, a Hebrew term for gravity was located. The researchers argue that, since no human being in the days of Moses could have known that over three thousand years later a man called Newton would discover gravity, the Torah could only have been composed by the all-knowing God, who concealed within it all knowledge and all future events, even people's names. It would be tedious to refute this nonsense. But the book has become popular and should be seen for what it is—a *reductio ad absurdum* of the whole enterprise of reading into holy texts what is patently not there, and thus missing the point of what *is* there.

Special Problems—Evolution, Creation, and Teleology

"How great are your works, O Lord; with wisdom have you made them all" (Ps. 104:24). The Jewish, Christian, and Muslim religions, whether in pious or philosophical mode, have consistently drawn attention to the manifestation of God's wisdom in creation. Thus, the main challenge to religion

of Darwinian and post-Darwinian theory is that it undermines the traditional notion of creation by conscious design, of creation with a purpose. That is, it undermines the teleological science that had ruled since the days of Aristotle and was vital to the Argument from Design.

By contrast, Descartes (1596–1650) held that all change and movement in the physical world were to be explained in purely mechanical terms; Spinoza (1634–77) scathingly dismissed the idea of final causes in nature as a superstition, a figment of the human imagination (see *Ethics*, appendix to part I); and David Hume (1711–1776) reduced causation to mere "association of ideas."[40] Teleology, as a scientific hypothesis, was dead.

But it was not buried. This final rite was performed in 1859, when Charles Darwin at last released his *Origin of Species* like a bombshell upon the Victorian scene. Evolution poses three challenges to the traditional understanding of the biblical creation story:

(a) It claims, against the Bible, that people existed long before six thousand years ago, when Adam and Eve supposedly were created.
(b) It denies a special act of creation of humankind, asserting the continuity of life forms and the heredity of *homo sapiens* from more primitive species of animal.
(c) It posits a process—natural selection—by which human beings, as well as other creatures, could come to exist without having been specifically planned.

The last of these ideas was at the same time the most fundamental challenge to faith and the weakest part of the theory. For Darwin had no plausible explanation of how variation occurred or indeed of the reproductive process itself. Almost a century after the announcement of Darwin's hypothesis, Watson and Crick at Cambridge together with Rosalind Franklin in London unraveled the structure of DNA. At last a coherent model was available for a self-replicating molecule able to carry the information needed for the formation of a new individual organism. Minor, accidental variations in the code could be responsible for variation within a species and, cumulatively, for the evolution of distinct new species. Nowadays, with genetic modification at the molecular level an everyday technology and much of the human genome itself decoded, Dawkins' "selfish gene"[41] has come of age. The idea of human beings or any other creatures being "designed" has become superfluous.

In the nineteenth and early twentieth century some Orthodox thinkers felt they could accommodate evolution within a traditional Jewish scheme. Several, including Israel Lipschutz (1782–1860),[42] noted the parallel between the evolution of species and the statement attributed to Abbahu (Gen. Rabbah 9:2), that "The Holy One, blessed be he, repeatedly created worlds and destroyed them until he made this one." Rav Kook (1865–1935) observed that Kabbalah recognizes an ongoing process of redemption, a completion of creation, analogous to evolution.[43] J.H. Hertz appended to his commentary on Genesis a note in which he asserts:

> . . . there is, therefore, nothing inherently un-Jewish in the evolutionary conception of the origin and growth of forms of existence from the simple to the complex, and from the lowest to the highest. The Biblical account itself gives expression to the same general truth of gradual ascent from amorphous chaos to order . . . *insisting, however, that each stage is no product of chance, but is an act of Divine will*, realizing the Divine purpose, and receiving the seal of the Divine approval. . . .[44]

While these and others grasped the idea of evolution as progress, they failed to understand that "progress" of this kind does not require design. They addressed the minor question of how a progression of life, even one extended far beyond the few thousand years allowed by Scripture, can be reconciled with tradition, but not the major theological issue: Why is God needed, not simply as the "ground of being," but as author and guide of specific events?

Probability

Some argue that the state of things is statistically so improbable that it can only have come about through the direct will of an intelligent creator. For example, Edward H. Simon,[45] a molecular biologist, calculated "the average time it would take a random sequence of three hundred base pairs to

evolve by chance mutation into a blue print for an enzyme, assuming a population of bacteria in steady state growth at a rate of one division (generation) per hour, with an average mutation rate of 10^{-8}/base pair/division." He concluded that 6×10^6 linear generations would be required for the new enzyme to arise by chance. If one applies the same sort of calculation to a higher animal, such as one of us, and bears in mind the large number of proteins coded in sequence in each of the large number of human genes, it is fairly obvious that we could not have evolved within the known time scale of the universe. Simon cautiously states, "These calculations do not PROVE anything." But he makes it pretty obvious that he wants us to think that organic evolution is impossible within the time-scale of our universe and hence that there must be a creator who has designed and created individual species. His identification as an "Orthodox Jewish Scientist" is a sign that he identifies this creator with the God of Jewish tradition and accepts the authenticity of the communications attributed to him by that tradition, though of course none of this follows from his argument. It is the characteristic leap from "architect" to "creator" that was resisted by Kant.

But are calculations of this type to be taken seriously, even when adopted by an atheist such as Fred Hoyle who draws from them the conclusion that life on earth must have been "seeded" from elsewhere ("Panspermia")?[46] I think not. The calculations are for the most part simply wrong, because they entirely ignore the dynamic nature of biological evolution.

The error is this. One can easily calculate the number of possible permutations of a sequence, *n* units long, of four amino acid radicals, which can occur in any order and any proportion of the four. The human genome consists of a sequence in the order of 10^{10} amino acids, and the number of possible permutations of a sequence that long is wildly beyond anything that could be conceived as actually being implemented within our universe. But biological systems do not churn out permutations like supercomputers. They follow a very limited number of possible evolutionary paths. The dynamics of the system restrict the ways in which a particular system can be modified, and interaction with the environment places still more limitations on the paths actually followed. All this makes it far less improbable that some sort of complex system could arise within the available time-scale. Bearing in mind the constraints imposed by the dynamics of biological systems, it is not absurdly unlikely that a species of our degree of complexity could have arisen, without the special intervention of a creator, within the earth's time-scale.

Cosmology—the Big Bang

Medieval philosophers, we have seen, were bothered by the theory, attributed to Aristotle, than the universe was eternal, not created. Until the latter part of the twentieth century, scientific cosmology remained wedded to the assumption that the universe had no beginning or end, or at least none that could be subjected to any empirical test. By the 1960s, however, the Big Bang theory had become dominant and remains so. Observations are best explained on the basis that the universe is finite, bounded, and expanding; extrapolating backwards from the current rate of expansion yields a point of origin roughly fifteen billion years ago.

Theologians, Jewish as well as Christian, have welcomed this as confirmation of Genesis,[47] which, unlike medieval Aristotelianism, does acknowledge a point of origin, which it is but a small step to identify with divine creation. But theologians should not rejoice prematurely, since:

(a) Some theorists propose that the universe is simply undergoing one of an indefinite, possibly infinite, series of phases of expansion and contraction, so that it in fact has no beginning.
(b) Some have argued that the concept of a first moment of time is meaningless (this is very different from saying that time stretches back infinitely).
(c) Genesis states that the *earth* was created at the beginning—a view rejected by all astronomers.
(d) There is no evident correspondence between the six days of creation in Genesis

> and the fifteen billion years of modern cosmology or even the five billion years of earth history, with regard to either periods of time or order of events.

Even the modern view of cosmology thus seems hardly to support the traditional biblical view of a purposeful and well organized creation by a divine being.

Franz Rosenzweig on Religion and Science

Franz Rosenzweig (1886–1929), in the first part of his *Star of Redemption*, uses vector analysis and calculus as analogies to indicate that creation "moves" in a certain direction. But these are never more than loose analogies, any more than his A = A, A = B, and B = A are equations in a mathematical sense. Rosenzweig was dropping mathematical words into a conversation to impress his readers rather than actually doing philosophy of science.

"Creation," in Rosenzweig's view, expresses the relationship between God and the world, as "revelation" expresses the relationship between God and humanity, and "redemption" that between humanity and the world. God has no "end" but relates to humanity (revelation) and world (creation), in an atemporal, asymptotic process. Norbert Samuelson finds in common between Rosenzweig and the medieval Jewish philosophers the fact that "creation is seen as a single act set outside the bounds of time in which the universe is understood as a movement from God in the direction of a moral ideal."[48] Maybe. But most medieval Jewish philosophers held emphatically that the universe *did* have a beginning, out of nothing, five thousand plus years ago. They did *not* view the concept of beginning as an "asymptote."

Yeshayahu Leibowitz on Religion and Science

Yeshayahu Leibowitz (1903–1994) was a professor of organic and biochemistry and neurophysiology at the Hebrew University and a practicing Orthodox Jew. This double life is reflected in his simplistic philosophy, according to which science and religion do not conflict, since they occupy totally distinct domains.[49] Judaism, according to Leibowitz, is a religious and historical phenomenon characterized by a recognition of the duty to serve God according to Jewish religious law; there is no such thing as Jewish philosophy, theology, mysticism, or science, and, thus, there is no problem of the relationship between religion and science. Unfortunately for this solution, Judaism is not remotely as Leibowitz describes it, for it has repeatedly made claims to authority in domains we would now wish to reserve for science.

Joseph Dov (Baer) Soloveitchik on Religion and Science

J.D. Soloveitchik (1903–1993) likewise reduced Torah to Halakhah.[50] Torah narratives have as their purpose the determination of law; even the creation story is not cosmogony or metaphysics but Halakhah—the law that we should engage in the creative activity of Torah. But he does acknowledge that Torah addresses natural phenomena, so that Torah and nature do not occupy distinct domains; however, the Man of Religion, the Man of Science, and the Man of Halakhah each brings a different set of *a priori* concepts with which to confront the world. Each looks at the same tree or sunset. But where the Man of Religion responds with awe, and the Man of Science by measuring in accordance with his *a priori* laws, the Man of Halakhah confronts the tree or the sunset with the *a priori* laws of the Torah of Moses and decides what blessing to pronounce, whether the time has come for evening prayer, and so on.

Norbert Samuelson on Religion and Science

Norbert Samuelson (1936–) attempts to show the congruence, or at least compatibility, of modern cosmology with biblical and later

Jewish accounts of creation. He indicates four aspects of the Jewish concept of creation that interface with contemporary scientific cosmology:[51] (1) the nature and origin of the universe in relation to time, (2) the role of space in the story of creation, (3) the relation of the actual physical universe to other possible universes, and (4) the relationship between the domains of science and ethics from a religious perspective. Genesis defines the first of these by stating, "In the beginning . . .;" the second, by the assertion of creation out of what was formless and void; the third, by its separation of heaven and earth; and the fourth, by the repeated declaration, "It was good." How does contemporary science handle these aspects of cosmogony?

The Big Bang theory posits a definite beginning for the cosmos, and one might have expected Samuelson, like more traditional "creationists," to seize on this as confirmation of Genesis. However, he cannot do this, since both his and Rosenzweig's "plain" readings of Genesis suggest an "atemporal" creation. Samuelson might perhaps have committed himself to Stephen Hawking's view that the concept of a first moment of time is meaningless; instead, he muddies the waters by referring to theories of parallel universes, inflationary universes, reversibility of time, and the like. Unfortunately, current mathematical descriptions of the history of the universe are so counter-intuitive that in attempting to put them into ordinary language, let alone the language of Genesis, one is drawn to paradox and confusion.

Much the same happens when Samuelson invokes quantum mechanics. Many people, including physicists such as Niels Bohr himself, have written as if quantum mechanics pointed to some sort of indefiniteness or undecidedness in the physical universe itself. But, as John L. Casti recently remarked, "the equation governing the wave function of a quantum phenomenon provides a causal explanation for every observation (completeness) and is well defined at each instant in time (consistency). The notorious 'paradoxes' of quantum mechanics arise because we insist on thinking of the quantum object as a classical one."[52]

Jewish Thought and Scientific Discovery

Jacob Neusner has observed that "the ways of making connections and drawing conclusions, specifically the mixed logics of the dual Torah in its ultimate canonical statement, produced a different sort of learning from the philosophical, the scientific;"[53] therefore, he argues, there is "no science in the mind of Judaism." It is true that the logic that characterizes Talmudic argumentation differs from that of the experimental or theoretical scientist.[54] But the question we have addressed is not whether there is "science in the mind of Judaism" but whether there is "science in the mind of Jews." As we have seen, there is.

Thus we answer the question posed at the beginning, "Is there any *organic* connection between Jewish thought and scientific discovery?," with a subdued affirmative. The Talmud itself demands, if in an ancillary role, answers to astronomical and biological questions and does not always obtain those answers by its usual "logic of fixed association." Moreover, "Jewish thought" is larger than the Talmud, ranging from biblical awe at God's creation, to the philosophies of the Middle Ages, to excitement at the new philosophies and scientific conceptions at the onset of modernity, to contemporary concern about conservation of the environment, all of which generate interest in the way the natural world works. The precise forms in which the normal human inquisitiveness of Jews has been channeled have been influenced by social and economic pressures as well as tradition, but we should not doubt that the love of learning and inquiry encouraged within Jewish tradition have stimulated scientific inquiry by Jews.

Norman Solomon

Notes

[1] See *The Christian Frame of Mind: Reason, Order, and Openness in Theology and Natural Science* (Colorado Springs, 1989).

[2] Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (London and Henley, 1966), chapter 3.

[3] B. Shab. 107b. Aristotle, in *De generatione animalium*, held that oysters, mussels, mosquitoes, flies and some plants were spontaneously generated. Pliny adds more species. The fourth century Christian Lactantius pointed to abiogenesis as nature's demonstration of the possibility of the virgin birth. Even Pasteur, in the nineteenth century, did not finally lay abiogenesis to rest.

[4] W.H. Feldman, *Rabbinic Mathematics and Astronomy* (London, 1931; reissued: New York, undated), pp. 74–76. *Maimonides, Mishneh Torah Qiddush ha-Hodesh* 9 and 10, explains both calculations of the *tekufah*. Feldman does not mention the so-called *B'raita d'Rav Adda bar Ahava*, in which Adda's *tekufah* is specified, but undoubtedly it is pseudepigraphic, like the *B'raita diShmuel*; possibly an attempt to claim a Jewish origin for Hipparchus' calculation.

[5] See, for instance, J. Naveh and S. Shaked, *Aramaic and Hebrew Incantations of Late Antiquity* (Jerusalem and Leiden, 1985) and J. Naveh Š. and Shaked, *Amulets and Magic Bowls: Aramaic Incantations of Late Antiquity* (Jerusalem, 1992).

[6] Julius Preuss, *Biblical and Talmudic Medicine* (New York, 1978); E. Carmoly, *Histoire des médicins juifs anciens et modernes* (Brussels, 1944); H. Friedenwald, *The Jews and Medicine*, 2 vols. (Baltimore, 1944; reprint: New York, 1962), an others.

[7] S.I. Levin and Edward A. Boyden, *The Kosher Code of the Orthodox Jew* (New York, 1969), p. vi.

[8] Bahya ibn Pakuda, *Duties of the Heart*, tr. M. Hymanson, 2 vols. (Jerusalem, 1962), vol. 1, second treatise, chapters 1–6.

[9] Hava Tirosh-Samuelson, in a forthcoming work based on her Jacobs Lectures, Oxford, 1997.

[10] Regarding Bahya, see Y.T. Langermann, "Maimonides' Repudiation of Astrology," in *Maimonidean Studies* 2 (1991), 125/6, n. 9. For Halevi, see *Kuzari* 4:9, which rejects astrology as it does not yield certain results and is not a revealed science. For the position of the Vilna Gaon, see *Biur ha-Gra* note 13 on *Shulhan Arukh Yore Deah* 179.

[11] On the preceding, see Arthur Beer, "Astronomy," in *Encyclopaedia Judaica*. See also S. Gandz, *Studies in Hebrew Mathematics and Astronomy* (New York, 1970).

[12] Beer, op. cit. Like others who cite the Zohar, Beer fails to give a precise reference.

[13] "*mitgalgala be-agula ke-kadur*." To translate this "revolves like a ball," though linguistically possible, seems tendentious; one would require unambiguous evidence that the author of the Zohar meant "revolve" and this is not forthcoming.

[14] *Baal ha-Maor* end of *Rosh Hashana* chapter 1 (p. 5 in the Vilna Alfasi).

[15] Herbert A. Davidson, in *Dictionary of Scientific Biography* (New York, 1971), vol. 3, p. 470.

[16] Harry Austryn Wolfson, *Crescas' Critique of Aristotle: Problems of Aristotle's Physics in Jewish and Arabic Philosophy* (Cambridge, 1929).

[17] Davidson, op. cit.

[18] Wolfson, op. cit., pp. 118–121.

[19] Shlomo Pines, in his Hebrew work *Post-Thomistic Scholasticism and the Theories of Hasdai Crescas* (Jerusalem, 1966), suggests this link.

[20] Elinor Lieber, "Asaf 's *Book of Medicines: A Hebrew Encyclopedia of Greek and Jewish Medicine, Possibly Compiled in Byzantium on an Indian Model*," in *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 38 (1984), pp. 233–49.

[21] Lieber, ibid., p. 244: "While this shows many affinities with the Hippocratic Oath, it is not taken from it directly. . . . From the literary point of view it constitutes a remarkable mosaic of Biblical phrases."

[22] Richard Gottheil, "Asaph," in *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, vol. 2, p. 162.

[23] See H. Friedenwald, *The Jews and Medicine* (Baltimore, 1944), vol. 1, p. 333.

[24] J. Israels, *European Jewry in the Age of Mercantilism, 1550–1750* (Oxford, 1985).

[25] André Néher, *Jewish Thought and the Scientific Revolution of the Sixteenth Century: David Gans (1541–1613) and His Times* (Oxford, 1986).

[26] E. Kupfer, "Concerning the Cultural Image of Ashkenazic Jewry and Its Sages in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries," in *Tarbiz* 42 (1972/3), pp. 113–147. See also David B. Ruderman, *Jewish Thought and Scientific Discovery in Early Modern Europe* (New Haven and London, 1995), pp. 55ff.

[27] Ruderman, op. cit., p. 72.

[28] The correspondence between Isserles and Luria—in Isserles' *Responsa*, ed. Asher Ziff, (Jerusalem, 1971), nos. 5–8—superficially concerns a certain type of lesion; no. 7 is a little less veiled.

[29] Solomon Luria, *Yam shel Shlomo* on *Hullin* 8 #12.

[30] See Tamar Ross, "The Miracle as an Additional Dimension in the Thought of the Maharal of Prague" (Hebrew), in *Da'at* 17 (1986), pp. 81–96, and Ruderman, op. cit., pp. 78–79.

[31] See André Néher, "Copernicus in the Hebraic Literature from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Century," in *Journal of History of Ideas* 38 (1977), pp. 219–21; H. Levine, "Paradise Not Surrendered: Jewish Reactions to Copernicus and the Growth of Modern Science," in R.S. Cohen and M.W. Wartofsky, eds., *Epistemology, Methodology, and the Social Sciences* (Boston, 1983), pp. 210–212.

[32] Ruderman, op. cit., p. 276.

[33] See José Faur, *In the Shadow of History: Jews and Conversos at the Dawn of Modernity* (Albany, 1992), pp. 87–109.

[34] On La Peyrère, see R. Popkin, *Isaac La Peyrère: His Life, Work and Influence* (Leiden, 1987) and Y. Kaplan, H. Méchoulan, and R. Popkin, *Menasseh ben Israel and His World* (Leiden, 1989).

[35] Ruderman, op. cit., p. 105.

[36] Of the copious Orthodox writing on this theme in recent decades the following is a sample: *Proceedings of the Association of Orthodox Jewish Scientists* (New York: 1970 onwards); Norman Lamm, *Torah U-Madda: The Encounter of Religious Learning and Worldly Knowledge in the Jewish Tradition* (North-

vale, 1990); E. Leder-hendler, *Jewish Responses to Modernity* (New York and London, 1994); L. Levi, *Torah and Science: Their Interplay in the World Scheme* (Jerusalem, 1983); Moshe Schatz, *Sparks of the Hidden Light: Seeing the Unified Nature of Reality through Kabbalah* (Jerusalem, 1996).

[37] Ruderman, op. cit., chapter 11; J.J. Petuchowski, *The Theology of Haham David Nieto* (New York, 1970).

[38] Ruderman, op. cit., chapter 12.

[39] *The Torah Code* (London, 1997).

[40] David Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* (first published in 1748), section III.

[41] Richard Dawkins, *The Selfish Gene* (Oxford and New York, 1976) and *The Blind Watchmaker* (Longman, 1986).

[42] See #3 of his *D'rush Or ha-Hayyim*, appended to the Order Neziqin (first published 1845) in many editions of his commentary *Tiferet Israel* on the Mishnah. The sermon, on life after death, was delivered in Danzig on the intermediate Sabbath of Passover, 1842, and therefore antedates the full-blown Darwinian theory of evolution by natural selection.

[43] See for instance *Orot ha-Qodesh* (Jerusalem, 1938), ns. 559 and 565.

[44] J.H. Hertz, *Pentateuch and Haftorahs: Hebrew Text English Translation and Commentary* 2nd edition (London, 1965), p. 194. The work was first published in 1936. The emphasis is his.

[45] Edward H. Simon, "Gene Creation," in A. Carmell and C. Domb, eds., *Challenge: Torah Views on Science and Its Problems* (London and Jerusalem, 1976), pp. 208–215.

[46] Fred Hoyle and Chandra Wickramasinghe, *Our Place in the Cosmos* (London, 1993).

[47] See, e.g., Aron Barth, *The Creation in the Light of Modern Science* (Jerusalem, 1968).

[48] Norbert M. Samuelson: *Judaism and the Doctrine of Creation* (Cambridge, 1994), p. 98.

[49] Yeshayahu Leibowitz, *Judaism, Human Values and the Jewish State*, ed. Eliezer Goldman (Cambridge and London, 1992).

[50] See *Halachic Man* (Philadelphia, 1983) and *The Halachic Mind: An Essay on Jewish Tradition and Modern Thought* (New York, 1986). This account considers only the former work.

[51] Op. cit., p. 221.

[52] *Scientific American*, October, 1996, p. 79.

[53] Jacob Neusner, *The Making of the Mind of Judaism: The Formative Age* (Atlanta, 1987), p. 140.

[54] M. Fisch, op. cit., has contested this.

New Testament, Mishnaic Readings in the

Revealing the common traditions in the Gospels and Tannaitic literature increases our understanding of both texts, clarifying in the process literary and historical dependencies. As a consequence of many years of common research by Christians and Jews, we now possess a greater sensitivity to and appreciation of the intertextuality of the Christian and Rabbinic writings.

Three examples taken from the different sources of the Gospels exemplify the results we hope to achieve: one from Q, the prayer of *Paternoster*, "ours day's bread give us today" (Matt. 6:11; Luke 11:3); the second from the threefold synoptic tradition: the image of the slave used by John the Baptist for himself to confront Jesus (Mark 1:7; Matt. 3:14; Luke 2:3); the third from the tradition of John: the wedding at Cana and the anointing of Jesus after his death (John 2:1–11; John 19:39–40). The first example concerns the lexicon, the second the *realia*, the third the theological and ethical aspects. The first two examples are considered briefly, the third more at length.

"Our Day's Bread Give Us Today"

τὸν ἄρτον ἡμῶν τὸν ἐπιούσιον δὸς ἡμῖν σήμερον (Luke 11:3); τὸν ἄρτον ἡμῶν τὸν ἐπιούσιον δίδου ἡμῶν τὸ καθ' ἡμέραν (Matt. 6:11).

At issue is the meaning of ἐπιούσιον, discussed in every commentary as yielding two possible translations: from *epi-ienai*, which is the bread of the coming day (that comes) or of the next day (the day to come), that is, the bread of tomorrow; or, from *epi-ousia*, it is the bread of subsistence. A beautiful *mashal* narrated by Simon b. Yohai, Sifre Num. 89:5 to Num. 11:9, sheds light on this issue:

> Then the people would recite the *Shema*, say the Prayer, then someone would go to the door of his house and collect his provision and the provision of his household (*parnasato we-paranasat beyto*), and afterward the sun got hot and the manna melted. Along these same lines, R. Simeon says, "On what account did the manna not come down for Israel on one day a year? It was so that they should turn their hearts to their father in heaven (*'et libban la-'abiken she-ba-shamayim*). One may draw a parable. To what may the matter be compared? To a

> king who made a decree for his son that he should provide a living provision (*li-hyot meparneso*) for his son all together on only one day a year, and he would greet his father only at the time that he was there to collect his living provision (*be-shaʿat parnasato*). One time the king went and made a decree that he would provide his living provision every day (*li-hyot meparneso be-kol yom*). The son said, 'Even if I greet father only at the time that he provides my living provision (*be-shaʿat parnasati*), it is enough for me.' So the case with Israel: If someone had five sons or five daughters, he would sit and stare, saying 'Woe is me, maybe the manna will not come down tomorrow! We'll all die of starvation. May it be your pleasure (*yehi retson mi-le-paneyka*) that it will come down.' So it turned out that they set their hearts heavenward (*hofekim ʾet libbam la-shamayim*)."

There are many surprising correspondences between the mashal and the prayer of the Gospels: 1) the discussed ἐπιούσιον of the Gospels is quite understandable as the *parnasah* of the mashal. 2) In the mashal and in this prayer of the Gospels, God is addressed as Father in Heaven. 3) The expression "may it be your pleasure" is found both in the mashal and in the Gospels.

Some points deserve to be underlined:

- This mashal belongs to the manna tradition. Its basis is the biblical story about the manna given every day in the limited quantity for the day, but its purpose is to explain the conditions of the prayer: according to the Bible text in Exod. 16:19 ("Let no man leave of it till the morning"), people are taught to pray for the day and no to be anxious about tomorrow.
- The same understanding of the prayer is shared by Jesus: the son asks of his father every day.
- Even for Jesus the anxiety about tomorrow must be excluded from the hearts of the sons of God: "Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day *is* the evil thereof" (Matt. 6:34).
- The *Sitz im Leben* of the mashal and of the prayer for the bread of the day are the same: we are concerned with an exegesis of the manna texts. It's quite accepted in the exegesis of the Gospels that *Paternoster* is composed from several small units, each of them coming from different contexts. It's obvious that the demand for daily bread comes from the manna tradition.
- Considering the common context, tradition, form, and lexicon, it is plausible that behind ἐπιούσιον is the concept of *parnasah*.

Other examples of the use of *parnasah* in the Tannaitic literature support this thesis: Mekhilta to Exod. 16:4 explains the command of God that people must collect their portion each day: "He who created the day has also created its sustenance. Hence R. Eleazar used to say: 'He who has enough to eat for today and says: What will I eat tomorrow?, behold he is of little faith.'" M. Pe. 8:7: "If he [the poor] spends the night there he should be given what is needful to support him for the night;" M. Qid. 4:14: "Hast thou ever seen a wild animal or a bird practicing a craft?—yet they have their sustenance without care and were they not created for naught else but to serve me? But I was created to serve my Maker. How much more then ought not I to have my sustenance without care? But I have wrought evil, and [so] forfeited my [right to] sustenance [without care]."

The Image of the Slave Used by John the Baptist for Himself to Confront Jesus (Mark 1:7; Matt. 3:11; Luke 3:16; John 1:27)

The image used by all the Synoptic Gospels and even by the Fourth Gospel is expressive: The Baptist is not worthy to bear the shoes of Jesus (Matt.) or to unloose the latchets of Jesus' sandals (Mark, Luke, John). In the commentaries it is usual to consider that the verb "unloose" comes originally from the Markan tradition. In my opinion, the verb "bear" (*bastasai*) used by Matthew could be a change in order to achieve a certain device of alliteration in the same verse: *bastásei . . . baptísei.*

What is certain is that to bear, loose, or put on the shoes of the master was the duty

of slaves, included in what is called *derek ʿabadim*. So in Mekhilta to Exod. 21:2 ("Six years he shall serve"):

> I might understand this is to mean in any kind of service, but Scripture says: "Thou shalt not make him to serve as a bondservant" (Lev. 25:39). Hence the sages said: A Hebrew slave must not wash the feet of his master, nor put his shoes on him, nor carry the things before him when going to the bathhouse, nor support him by the hips when ascending steps, nor carry him in a litter or a chair or a sedan chair as slaves do (*ke-derek she-ʿabadim ʿosim*)."

An old mashal taken from Sifre Num. 115:5 (to Num. 15:40) is enlightening in this respect:

> The matter may be compared to the case of a king whose ally's son was taken captive. When the king paid the ransom, he did not redeem him as a free man but as a slave, so that if the king made a decree and the other did not accept it, he might say to him: "You are my slave." When he came into a city, he said to him: "Put shoes on me, carry my clothing before me, and bring them to the bathhouse." The son began to complain. The king produced the bond and said to him: "You are my slave."

In B. Ket. 96a there is a statement by Joshua b. Levi: "All manner of service that a slave must render to his master a student must render to his teacher, except that of unloosening his shoes."

It seems that in Rabbinic tradition, this service was reserved only for Canaanites slaves, that is, it is considered the lowest kind of service together with service in the bathhouses. The following expressions are meaningful: "Our rabbis taught: How [is a heathen slave acquired] by *hazakah*? If he unlooses his shoes for him [the purchaser], or carries his baggage after him to the baths; if he undresses, washes him, anoints, scrapes, dresses him, puts on his shoes, or lifts him, he acquires him" (B. Qid. 22b); "Said R. Yohanan: Should any person explain to me [the necessity for the expression of] 'for oxen' in accordance with the view of Ben Bag-Bag, I would carry his clothes after him into the bathhouse" (B. Erub. 27b); "R. Yohanan said: He who will explain to me [the Mishnah of] barrel so as to agree with one Tanna, I will carry his clothes after him to the baths" (B. B.M. 41a; B. San. 62b). Even in the Greek world, both the service of fastening and unfastening sandals and washing the master in the bathhouse is a slave's duty, as we read in Epictetus, Diss. III, 26, 121. In the Stoics' and Cynics' circles, the use of sandals was a demonstration of wealth; therefore walking barefoot is included in the ideal of a free and poor life and is a typical choice of the Cynics (Pseudo-Anacarsis V, Musonius Rufus Frg. XIX, Pseudo-Socrates VI; cf. Crossan).

In this way we are able to appreciate the impact of the Baptist's words and equally ancient Rabbinic tradition.

The Wedding at Cana and the Anointing of Jesus after His Death (John 2:1–11, 19:39–40)

Jesus' Burial

All the commentaries have realized that the details of Jesus' burial with luxurious anointment, as narrated in John 19:39–40, do not come from the synoptic tradition of the passion (Mark 16:1ff.; Luke 23:56–24:3), where the anointing of Jesus' body after his death is *expressis verbis* denied.[1] I think rather that the story in the fourth Gospel is a composition by the evangelist himself: In this scene Nicodemus reappears, a *dramatis persona* of the Gospel of John, who had appeared at the beginning of Jesus' ministry, and, now, as an inclusion, at the close of Jesus' life with an open reference to that beginning (John 19:39, "And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night").[2] The lexicon used by John is meaningful: myrrh and aloes are not products for a burial but rather for weddings:[3] "myrrh and aloes, with all the chief spices" (Song 4:14); "I have perfumed my bed with *myrrh, aloes*, and cinnamon. Come, let us take our fill of love until the morning: let us solace ourselves with loves" (Prov. 7:17–18); the poem of the royal weddings sings in this way of the clothes of the bridegroom: "All thy garments smell of *myrrh, and aloes*, and cassia" (Ps. 45:9). There is still more: the exaggerated quantity of perfumes ("about a hundred pound weight," John 19:39, i.e., 32:6 kgs.) shows that we are tackling a very

symbolical composition; the mention of the garden in this scene reminds us of the garden of the Song of Songs: "A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon" (Song 4:15), and the next scene in the Gospel, the meeting with Mary Magdalene in the garden (John 20:1–2, 11–18), suggests the anointing Jesus received was in fact a bridegroom's anointing as preparation for this love scene. Literary criticism accepts that the encounter with Mary Magdalene is a midrash about the Song of Songs poem.[4]

The intention of the Fourth Gospel is clearly to close the life of Jesus with the great homage paid by the disciples (cf. Dodd). For John, the anointing made by the sinner woman in the house of Simon the Leper (Mark 14:3–9; Matt. 26:6–13; John 12:1–8) was not enough, although the synoptic Gospels understood it proleptically as the burial anointment that should be impossible. Why does John build the scene of the burial anointment? Dodd said that there wasn't any theological motive. Let me show you the role of the burial homage in Rabbinic tradition; then we can better understand John's intention.

The Bestowing of Loving Kindness

This expression (*gemilut hasadim*) was coined by the rabbis; it doesn't appear either in the Bible or Qumran documents.[5] The expression points to the works of *hesed*, love, absolutely gratuitous by definition, which nevertheless must accompany the Torah and Justice. Just as God is merciful, man must be merciful. Not to acting mercifully is equivalent to negating the existence of the merciful God (Qoh. Rabbah 7:1):

> R. Judah said: It teaches you that if one repudiates an obligation of benevolence, it is as though he repudiates the cardinal doctrine [of God's existence]. As for King David (peace be upon him), he was benevolent to all, saying, "Even to a murderer as well as to the slain, to a pursuer as well as to the pursued, I show kindness as to a righteous man." That is what is written, "But as for me, in Thy mercy do I trust; my heart shall rejoice in Thy salvation. I will sing unto the Lord because the doing of benevolence is with me" (Ps. 8:6).

Acts of loving kindness are listed in different ways in different books. It is noteworthy that God was the first to perform this kind of deed. The mashal in Mekhilta to Exod. 14:19 is a beautiful example. A more precise list is found in Targum Neofiti to Gen. 35:9:

> O God of eternity—may his name be blessed for ever and forever and ever—your meekness and your rectitude and your justice and your strength and your glory will not pass for ever and ever. You have taught us to bless the bridegroom and the bride from Adam and his consort; and again you have taught us to visit those who are ill from our father Abraham the just when you were revealed to him in the Valley of vision while he was still suffering from circumcision. And you taught us to console the mourners from our father Jacob the just; the way of the world overtook Deborah. . . . And Rachel died beside him on his journey and he sat down and crying aloud . . . but you in your good mercies were revealed to him and blessed him. . . ."

TgPsJ Deut. 34:6 completes this list: God taught us also to clothe the naked when he gave the clothes to Adam and Eve, and he taught us to feed the poor when he gave the manna to the sons of Israel, and he taught us to bury the dead when he himself buried Moses. Similar lists are in Gen. Rabbah 8:13, B. Sot. 14a, Qoh. Rabbah 7:2, etc. In these lists, the following acts of loving kindness are included: blessing the bride and the bridegroom, providing clothes for the naked, feeding the poor, consoling the mourners, visiting the ill, burying the dead.[6] Similar enumerations are found in the Bible: Ben Sira 7:25, 32–35; Job 16:20, Tobit 1:17, 4:16. The last reason to act in this way is because God is merciful and did it before,[7] as B. Sot. 43a states:

> R. Hama son of R. Hanina further said: What means the text: "Ye shall walk after the Lord your God' (Deut. 13:5)? . . . But [the meaning is] to walk after the attributes of the Holy One, blessed be he. As he clothes the naked (for it is written: And the Lord God made for Adam and for his wife coats of skin, and clothed them), so do thou also clothe the naked. The Holy One, blessed be he, visited the sick (for it is written: And the Lord appeared unto him by the oaks of Mamre), so do thou also visit the sick. The Holy One, blessed be he, comforted mourners (for it is written: And

> it came to pass after the death of Abraham, that God blessed Isaac his son), so do thou also comfort mourners. The Holy one, blessed be he, buried the dead (for it is written: And he buried him in the valley), so do thou also bury the dead."

The Blessing of the Bride and Groom and the Burying of the Dead

In the Rabbinic literature, the first and the last blessings are emphasized.

- ARN B 8:4: "When scholars sit studying and a funeral cortege or marriage procession passes by, if enough people are in the procession, the scholars are not to interrupt their studies; if there are not enough in the procession, they are to interrupt their studies. A story is told about the disciples of R. Judah that they were once seated studying and a marriage procession passed by. R. Judah said to them: Colleagues, come and busy yourselves with the bride, for we find that God, in the same way, busied himself with the bride at the very beginning, as Scripture says: 'And the rib which the Lord had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man' (Gen. 2:22)."[8]
- Semahot XI, rule 7: "We interrupt the study of the Torah for the sake of a funeral or bridal procession. Abba Saul said: Good deeds take precedence over the study of the Torah. R. Judah acted as follows: Whenever he saw a dead person or a bride being honored, he used to look at his disciples and exclaim: Deeds before study."
- B. Sot. 14a: R. Simlai expounded: The Torah begins with an act of benevolence and ends with an act of benevolence. It begins with an act of benevolence, for it is written: And the Lord God made for Adam and for his wife coats of skin and clothed them' (Gen. 3:21); and it ends with an act of benevolence, for it is written: 'And he buried him in the valley' (Deut. 34:6)." Similarly, in Qoh. Rabbah 7:2. Cf. Ruth Rabbah 3:6 to 1:19.

It is curious and meaningful that even the halakhah of the Mishnah associates brides/bridegrooms and the dead: "They may await nightfall at the Sabbath limit to see the business of [the reception of] a bride or of [the burial of] a corpse" (M. Shab. 23:4); "If a man hired an ass-driver or a wagon-driver to bring litter-bearers and pipers for a bride or for a corpse . . ." (M. B.M. 6:1).

In the later stages of the tradition, all acts of loving kindness are summarized in the homage to the bridal couple and the dead. So Pirqe deRabbi Eliezer has two chapters (11–12) devoted to the service of loving-kindness for the bride and bridegroom and for the dead and mourners.

It must be noted that this tradition goes back to biblical times: in 2 Kings 2:5, burying the dead is called *ʿoseh hesed*. In the deuterocanonic book of Tobit, the leitmotif of the story is the piety of the father burying the dead and the reward received by the son (his wedding).

The Composition of the Fourth Gospel: It Begins with an Act of Benevolence and Ends with an Act of Benevolence

Now it is easy to detect a literary structure in the Fourth Gospel. Just as the rabbis say of the Torah, John also begins with an act of benevolence and ends with an act of benevolence: The public ministry of Jesus begins with a bridal homage (John 2:1–11) and ends with a homage to the dead (John 19:39–40). My suggestion is that in this case the Rabbinic structure of *gemilut hasadim* is at work. There is also a special care taken to underline some correspondences between the scenes:

- The first scene is a wedding banquet in which the wine is abundant, just as in Song 5:1: "I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse: I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey; I have drunk my wine with my milk: eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved." The last scene becomes a bridegroom's anointment as in the Song.

- In both scenes the homage has very exaggerated proportions: about 600 liters of water converted into wine, and almost 33 kgs. of myrrh and aloe.
- In the scene of the anointment, there are also "the friends of the bridegroom," Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathaea, who prepare the bridegroom for the encounter with the beloved bride (the community of disciples in John's symbolism).

The parallel is not perfect at all, although many authors have put it forward: a) In Cana, Jesus makes "his first sign" (John 2:11) in order that the disciples believe in him; at the burial, the disciples acknowledge his glory and anoint him as a king for the wedding; b) In Cana, bride and bridegroom have no face and no voice; only Jesus is there, speaking and acting as the real bridegroom, which is confirmed in the burial scene.

I don't presume to put this forward as symmetrical. It is enough to appreciate at the beginning and the end of the Gospel, the two deeds of loving-kindness of the merciful God, underlined by Rabbinic literature. Already in Qumran the works of God were understood as an abundance of mercy: ". . . potent wisdom which trusts in all the deeds of God and depends on his abundant mercy" (1QS 4,4). I think it is very important to understand the two scenes in the totality of the "deeds of God," which are a leitmotif in the Gospel of John. Jesus says over and over again that he is doing the deeds of his father and only what he sees his father doing: "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his *work*" (John 4:34); "My Father worketh hitherto, and I *work*" (John 5:17); "For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater *works* than these, that ye may marvel" (John 5:20); "for the *works* which the Father hath given me to finish, the same *works* that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me" (John 5:36); "I have done one *work* [John 5:1–15], and ye all marvel" (John 7:21); "Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the *works* of God should be made manifest in him" (John 9:3); "I must work the *works* of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can *work*" (John 9:4); "the *works* that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me" (John 10:25); "Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those *works* do ye stone me?" (John 10:32); "If I do not the *works* of my Father, believe me not" (John 10:37); "The Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the *works*. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very *works*' sake" (John 14:10–11). Jesus' signs are included in these works:[9] to feed people (John 6:1–12),[10] to cure the sick (John 5:1–18; 9:1–41), to raise the dead (John 11:1,46).

According to John, Jesus' works are the works of the merciful God, and within the frame of the two most significant works the Evangelist shapes Jesus' story.

MIGUEL PÉREZ FERNÁNDEZ

NOTES

[1] When early on Sunday morning the women came to the tomb, it was too late (Mark 16:1ff.; Luke 23:56–24:3): Jesus' body was not there!

[2] The synoptic tradition knows the role of Josef of Arimathaea in Jesus' burial (Mark 15:42ff.; Matt. 27:57ff; Luke 23:50ff.), but does not say anything about Nicodemus, who is a character exclusive to John.

[3] Cf. Dodd. "Esta clase de aromas, mirra y áloe, no se empleaban para la sepultura. Por el contrario, se usaban para perfumar la alcoba (Prov 7,17) y a ellos olían los vestidos del rey-esposo (Sal 45,9). Se mencionan con frecuencia en el Cantar en claro contexto nupcial (4,14; cf. 3,6; 4,6; 5,1.13)" (J. Mateos – J. Barreto, *El Evangelio de Juan* (Madrid, 1979), p. 835.

[4] Cf. Songs 3:2f.; 3:4; 4:15; 5:2; etc. See "Juan y el Derash del Cantar de los Cantares," C. Bernabé, *María Magdalena. Tradiciones en el Cristianismo primitivo* (Estella, 1994), pp. 160–166. Cf. Mateos-Barretto: *El Evangelio de Juan* (Madrid, 1979), pp. 854ff.; R. Brown, *El Evangelio según San Juan* (Madrid, 1979), p. 1323.

[5] In Qoh. Rabbah 7:2, the source of the expression *gemilut hasadim* is referred to in Ps. 13:6: "But I have trusted in thy mercy (*be-hasdeka*); my heart shall rejoice in thy salvation. I will sing unto the Lord, because he hath dealt bountifully (*gamal*) with me." It's noteworthy that in 1QS II,1 the same lexicon is used to point out that God's mercy covers our sins: "We have transgeressed, we have sinned . . . But he has showered on us his merciful favor for ever and ever."

[6] It is noteworthy that the Essenes also have a similar list: CD–A XIV, 12–17.

[7] Luke 6:36: "Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful;" cf. Matt. 5:45, 48. A more complete list is found in Matt. 25:31–46: feeding the hungry, giving a drink to the thirsty, giving hospitality to the foreigner, clothing the naked, taking care of the sick, visiting the prisoner. In 1 Tim. 5:10 a list of good deeds includes: educating children, practicing hospitality, washing the feet of the poor, consoling the mourners. Cf. James 2:14:25. Ben Sira knows a similar list: 7:25, 32–35. In the Rabbinic literature, ARN A 4:5–6; 41, 10; Mekhilta to Exod. 18:20; TgPsJ Exod. 18:20; Sifre Deut. 323 (to Deut. 32:29), etc. Cf. Strack-Billerbeck, excursus 23 in vol. IV, "Die altjüdischen Liebeswerke."

[8] See notes in the translation by A. Saldarini, *The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan* (Leiden, 1975).

[9] "The concept of God's saving acts through Christ is common in John's Gospel: 5:20, 36; 7:3, 21; 9:3, 4; 10:25, 32, 37, 38; 14:10, 11, 12; 15:24. These statements relate to individual works done by Jesus. As miracles, they bear witness to Jesus and to the salvation which He brings: 5:36: αὐτὰ τὰ ἔργα ἃ ποιῶ μαρτυρεῖ περὶ ἐμοῦ; cf. 10:25; 14:11; 15:24. But it is not merely the thought of miracles, or of the *doxa* transparent in them, which determines these passages, for in John the thought of καλὰ ἔργα is inseparably linked therewith (10:32). In this christological context, therefore, we are brought up against the problem of works in the NT, and we can at once state that καλὰ ἔργα are a demonstration of God's working in Jesus and therefore in believers. They are testimony to the divine work in man. It is in keeping with the christological outlook of John that miracles can be described directly as God's works, partly in the sense of God's working in Jesus and partly in the sense of the activity which He laid upon Jesus. The thought of the unity of the work of salvation is always there in the background; thus 9:3: ἵνα φανερωθῇ τὰ ἔργα τοῦ θεου, refers to God's saving activity as a whole, this being manifested in individual miracles by way of example" (G. Bertram, TWBNT, s.v. *ergon*).

[10] Note also the abundance of bread: John 6:10,13.

Normative and Schismatic in Rabbinic Judaism

To describe, analyze, and interpret normative opinion formed into coherent structures of data—native category-formations re-framed in the contemporary context of social inquiry—in Rabbinic Judaism is not easy. That is because the documents contain masses of conflicting opinions on any number of topics. So it will not suffice to find topically germane sayings. One has to establish grounds for classifying all cited data as normative, representative of a system, constituting "Judaism,"—not merely of idiosyncratic opinion. That means to claim to differentiate the normative from the schismatic and episodic.

But how to do so, and on what basis out of bits and pieces of evidence, much of it free-floating, and some of it contradictory, do we claim to construct a system and a structure? A literature that records contradictory opinions and values difference and debate, that rarely declares openly who is wrong, poses problems for systematic recapitulation such as is attempted here. That canon of Halakhah is absolutely open to diverse opinion, so that we may find nearly everything and its opposite in some setting or other. So the character of the literary evidence presents obstacles to validating the claim to speak of the social teaching of Rabbinic Judaism. That is why, when it comes to the same writings' social teaching, we confront the problem that discerning the theological structure and system poses. That is, how are we to know what represents the whole viewed all together and all at once?

Normative and Schismatic: How Do We Know the Difference? [A] Formal Evidence. Logic

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To articulate the problem is simple enough. The documents convey a vast corpus of singleton-sayings, representing individual authorities. Were we to compose an account of the social teaching of Rabbinic Judaism out of such episodic evidence, we should know everything but the main thing: the shape and construction of the whole. For, as all affirm who have studied the documents even in small parts, the Rabbinic compilations contain many conflicting statements, and much that simply does not cohere at all. On what basis, then, are we able to assert knowledge of "the theology . . ." or "the social teaching of Rabbinic Judaism" as distinct from notional and occasional sayings on this and that in the name of this one or that one. What transforms hunting and gathering sayings on topics, joined with free association on this or that, into a systematic account of a structure and system of thought and doctrine?

In using the word "Judaism" along with "normative" and its equivalents, we claim describe a cogent, coherent system of thought. So, speaking figuratively, we thereby allege that we know what, without regard to temporal or locative differentiation, "the rabbis"—the Judaic sages of the Mishnah, Midrash, and Talmuds—think everywhere, throughout all their distinctive writings. Certain principles permeate their thought and shape the details, determinate conceptions and doctrines animate the whole. That identification and definition of the prevailing logos—logic, doctrine alike—defines the task of anyone who undertakes to describe theology or social teaching alike. On what basis, then, do we allege as representative any account of theology or social thought?

First, let us exclude any claim to know what, in general, "the Jews" thought: the state of opinion, the ethnic consensus if any. This method then finds its rules and regulations in the analysis of ideas that are set forth. We do not know what proportion of sages held which opinion, and that sense of "representative," the political and sociological dimension, does not figure, only the naked, generative logic pertains. And, all the more so, we know very little about what Jews other than sages and disciples thought. No one today imagines that the Oral Torah on its own can portray the opinions of those who flourished outside of the circles that produced the documents of the Oral Torah, preserved, studied, and proposed to realize them in the common life. That is because, to exaggerate only slightly, every page of the Rabbinic writings of late antiquity attests to the tension and conflict between "our sages of blessed memory" and the rest of that holy Israel that, sages insisted, in its entirety belongs within the Kingdom of Heaven and under the domain of God, made manifest in the Torah. So on what basis do we portray *the* sages and *their* beliefs and opinions?

By what is representative we mean what fits the generative logic that everywhere governs. we do not mean what stands for broadly held opinion but rather what in this detail or that expresses the prevailing rationality of the system viewed in its entirety. By that we refer to

1. what embodies the ubiquitous and governing *modes of rational thought*, on the one side, and to
2. what sets forth the necessary and sufficient and *integral doctrines generated by that rationality*, on the other.

By that criterion of what is "representative," therefore, the former—the modes of thought—are alleged to define rationality, and the latter—the logically-consequent propositions, from simple to complex—are claimed to define the *logos*, the logical principle that pervades the whole. This for theology takes form in the idea that creation reveals God's justice, defined in terms man comprehends, and appears in many forms. Matters of social thought and doctrine are embodied in the normative Halakhah that sages construct for their Israel's governance. Since the Talmuds systematically demonstrate the logical coherence of the laws,

showing how Halakhot, laws, constitute the Halakhah, the completely harmonious and coherent Law, we do not claim more than the evidence itself attests in framing matters. Not only so, but by limiting the evidence to the native category-formations defined by the sages themselves, we define an exceedingly solid ground for our construction. It is within that logic of system and the cogency of the native category-formations that we invoke the claim of normativity. One thereby claims not only to recapitulate what is implicit in the details of the Halakhah but also to identify what is at stake therein for the social order: no more than sages said themselves.

By what is normative is meant, the official position of the rabbis, viewed as a collegium, In intellectual terms, the canonical documents correspond to the political outcome of a council in the model of the councils that declared Catholic and Orthodox Christianity. Christianity had the institutional capacity to assemble the authorities, the bishops and their counterparts, and determine the Church consensus, and this they did with the backing of the Roman state at critical turnings in the unfolding of their faith. To accomplish the same goal the Rabbinic sages produced their authoritative writings, both recording difference and also declaring the consensus and the rule. Their counterpart to the Church council's institutional, political authority they devised out of the compelling power of reason and logic, consensus demonstrated and discovered, not (merely) declared and then enforced in the exact sense of the word. How, then, are we to know what composition or composite represents the whole and was deemed obligatory for all who practiced the religion of "the whole Torah of Moses, our rabbi," that the world has long known as Judaism?

As to what is representative of the entirety of opinion in the documents of the Oral Torah, two approaches strike us as plausible, the one self-indulgent, the other rigorous.

The first is to rely upon subjective impressions, buttressed by a broad sample of data. That approach speaks of "they," but means "I." For how are we to know whether we might be wrong in our characterization of matters, if there is no system or order to the work? If, for example, we may find expressed in various ways in the diverse documents a given view, we may claim that that view represents the generality of opinion. The position is assigned hither and yon, to many rabbis, in many writings. But what would tell us that we err in that characterization of broadly held opinion, short of interviews, access to letters, a vast sample of data? Still, not a few have taken that route in characterizing "the rabbis'" views of this and that, even turning the recurrence of a given saying in several places or versions into "he often used to say. . . ." (or, for Gospels scholarship, "the Sermon on the Mount" and "the Sermon on the Plain").

But to declare representative a statement that occurs here and there and to treat as idiosyncratic one that occurs fewer times or in only one or two documents strikes us as lazy and uncomprehending—a resort to intellectual labor-saving devices. For not much thought goes into counting up occurrences rather than reflecting upon inner architectonics of ideas. A given idea may prove critical to the structure over all, even though it appears only in a document that came to closure early on (then to be taken for granted thereafter) or only very late among documents read in sequence (then articulated only long centuries after the initial impact, for example, an event in logic before articulation in a particular case). An ambitious venture requires more thought than is invested in adding up occurrences and finding the common denominator.

The second way appeals to the character of the logic that inheres in the Halakhic native category-formations and imparts to them coherence. That inquiry into what represents the logic of the whole, what proves coherent to the principal doctrines of the whole, forms the subtext of our entire account. We claim only that the Oral Torah attests to its own integrity by the common criteria of reasoned thought. By "the logic of the whole" we therefore mean, modes of thought that govern throughout, for instance, analysis through comparison and contrast, on the one side, paradigmatic thinking, on the other. By coherence we mean, doctrines that fit in place and do not impose stresses or strains on the structure that

encompasses them. They not only do not contradict one another ("God is one," "God is many"), but they reinforce one another ("God is just," "God is merciful"—two aspects of a single rationality). What represents the structure and system that sustain a variety of kindred writings emerges in positions that logically hold together among them all.

These positions, whether concerning doctrine or correct modes of thought, will dictate not only what may be said but also what must not be said. And, more consequentially, the governing logic will form a tight fabric, of gossamer weight to be sure, spread over the whole, a thin, translucent tent that holds within everything that belongs and keeps out everything that does not. For theology, beginning with the principle of one, sole, omnipotent, just God opens the way for inclusion: what fits in good order. It also identifies contradiction among parts. But for the Halakhah that embodies the social teaching of Rabbinic Judaism, beginning with the native category-formations, rather than an intuited generative principle, however justified, defines the surer way. Sages themselves have defined these category-formations, and they on their own have carefully, systematically inspected the contents of those native category-formations for consistency and logical sequence.

Let us make matters concrete, using a case drawn from theology, not social philosophy. If, to take an obvious example, the one God who created all things is just, then that generative doctrine cannot accommodate without comment cases of structural injustice. So the doctrine that the wicked (nonetheless) prosper cannot on its own find a place. Some solution to anomalies that confront the theologians has to accommodate reality to the system, and the system to reality. And it cannot be a solution that posits two gods or no god or a weak god or an unjust god. That is an obvious instance of systemic coherence. And it is where the parts of the system cohere that we identify what is normative.

Now to state simply how this works. What is representative is that corpus of convictions that fit together, logically and doctrinally, and what does not is noted but excluded from the account of representative views. To state the matter with heavy emphasis:

> *To describe theology is to identify the logos, the logic, of religious ideas contained principally in the Aggadah but expressed also in the Halakhah. This demands thinking philosophically about religion.*
>
> *To describe social philosophy is to discern the logos, the logic of thought about the social order, that is given concreteness in the applied reason and practical logic of the Halakhah. This demands thinking analogically about the Halakhic norms in their rich detail.*

The result of such thought for theology sets forth in the correct and inexorable order, start to finish, the structure and system that order the whole, even making provision for the preservation of views that do not fit and modes of thought that jar.

Normative and Schismatic: How Do We Know the Difference? [B] The Canonical Signals of Normativity

But we are not left to reconstruct out of our own resources of reflection the evidence for what is normative supplied by logic and criticism. For the Rabbinic sages in their writings also signify what is normative, so in their behalf a simple response suffices. A fifteen-hundred-year-old tradition of learning, amplified in a few places just now, serves. Three principal indicators characteristic of the canonical writings establish the normative view and mark the schismatic one. Each abstract from a source that we set forth, we claim, speaks for the collegium of the sages, represents the Oral Torah viewed whole, and coheres with all others. That permits speaking of the Rabbinic sages' social philosophy, not merely episodic sayings juxtaposed.

First, it is a well-established principle in the legal (Halakhic) documents that where we have attributed and unattributed rules in conflict, a rule that is not attributed to a named authority stands for all authorities, ordinarily sets the norm. One bearing a name may well be, and mostly is, schismatic (with the proviso that certain names carry within themselves signals as to normative status). That hermeneutics is stated

explicitly in the earliest documents and is taken for granted in the composition of those that reached closure later on. It forms the premise of much analysis in the two Talmuds.

A further trait of the documents, second, both of law (*Halakhah*) and of lore (*Aggadah*), has been realized more recently but was always implicit from the very beginning. It is that the authors of a cogent composition, all the more so the framers of a composite, so set forth their accounts as to give a clear indication of the position they favor. Their compilation forms not a scrapbook but a dissertation, with a few blatant propositions at stake throughout. They show that this is so in a number of ways. They may announce the besought proposition at the outset and amass evidence to demonstrate it. That is a syllogistic argument in narrative-composite form. Or they may indicate their position by formal signals of order. They may lead to it at the end, through assembling much evidence, most of it affirmative, some not. A number of composites that set down the coherent judgment of the compilers about a given topic or problem have been identified. These composites, as a matter of fact, either prove unique in the entire literature—the sole systematic presentation of a topic—or turn out to be entirely coherent with other composites on the same theme. One must rely heavily on the givens of composites. In this same context, finally, we pay attention to the clear direction and intent of a dialectical argument, which affords equal opportunity to conflicting viewpoints but in the end signals the more plausible of the two. So much for compositions and composites.

Third, along these same lines, there is the matter of self-evidence, that is to say, indications within the documents of the Oral Torah of principles that are taken for granted and that generate secondary articulation along lines that said principles dictate. Sages have left no doubt about the indicators of self-evidence. In the Rabbinic writings, particularly but not only in the Talmud of Babylonia, certain points of connection are taken as self-evident, so that compilers of composites simply *know* what native category "obviously" joins with what other one, and what does not. Through what is taken for granted, the system makes its statement of theological givens. For the Bavli odd connections reveal premises as to what is self-evident.

When, therefore, we can outline the principles of constructing groups of categories into intelligible combinations, we find in those principles the main lines of theological order and structure. When we can state what emerges as self-evident when we join two otherwise distinct topics, we gain insight into the established laws of meaning and order that govern a system of coherent thought. So in examining the rules for joining native categories, we identify those indicators of correct usage that point toward the logic pervading the whole. At many points in any exposition of the normative theology of the Oral Torah, one may introduce evidence of self-evidence in the form of connections that are drawn and conclusions that those connections dictate. To state matters simply: compositions and large composites systematically demonstrate propositions. Where these large-scale exercises of proof do not confront contrary exercises, or where they encompass compositions that argue both sides of a question but clearly favor one position over another, then we have a normative statement on the proposition at hand.

Fourth, not only compositions and composites but even entire documents weigh in, for the compilers of a document, moreover, have been shown through extensive research to take positions on important questions. This they do by their selection and arrangement of materials, by their juxtapositions of topics beyond the dimensions of composites, and by other subtle editorial means. They leave little doubt as to the positions they deem authoritative. Anyone who has worked through and identified the hermeneutics of, for one example, Genesis Rabbah, or of the Mishnah for another, will understand that documents seen whole do convey coherent judgments. Most, though not all, of the documents of the Oral Torah set forth coherent statements, which through a systematic labor of comparison and contrast we have already identified. That makes

possible the description of the theological system of the writings seen whole. That is because by definition, the statement on a given, fundamental topic that is made by a document within the Oral Torah, not contradicted by the statement made by any other document—and none is!—constitutes a reliable indicator of the theology of the Oral Torah viewed whole.

On the basis of these facts characteristic of compositions, composites, and entire documents, we mark as representative of the position of "the rabbis," or the entirety of the Oral Torah all of the statements we make concerning a given issue. That is to say,

1. it will be anonymous or at least entirely unchallenged,
2. it will prove coherent to other statements on the same subject,
3. it will define the premise of making certain connections or it will emerge as a result of making said connection,
4. it will represent the primary focus of discourse, much doted upon, while a contrary opinion may register not at all or only schismatically,
5. it will be presented as the regnant opinion when conflicting opinions register, e.g., as the opening proposition, or as the climactic statement; or in some other significant way signals will be given to accord privilege to the statement cited or alluded to in these pages as representative of the structure and system of Rabbinic Judaism seen whole, in proportion, as a coherent statement.

Any one or more of these traits we take to signal normativity, so long as contrary evidence does not surface. Through the media just now outlined, sages did set forth the orthodox and catholic position of the Torah as they framed matters, the Oral in relationship to the Written Torah.

True, taste and judgment intervene at every point. Issues of authority may find resolution in politics, not logic. Surely there is a more certain way of identifying the norm. But, for the work of setting forth a coherent logic of the faith, a theological structure and system, they chose the instruments they had available. These were, and remained for later ages, the instruments of intellect, proposition, evidence, argument, thought and the writing down of thought—consensus attained through persuasion. Like the Jewish people, lacking state instruments of government, so the sages had no better options. The people had no politics of consequence, so only in exceptional, transient circumstances could the sages work through political institutions. No emperor confirmed their views, no court enforced their judgments, no instruments of legitimate violence and coercion formed the last resort. Not only so, but the sages as a collegium met, if at all, only irregularly—except on the field of argument. Nor could charismatic authorities accomplish much. As individuals, to have a say was to deny their own integrity, the logic of their definitive myth—that, after all, is the meaning of claiming to receive and hand on a tradition, as sages did when they spoke of the oral tradition of Sinai, the Oral part of the Torah.

Notice the contrast. Their counterparts in the equally complex world of Christianity did two things that sages did not, and could not, do. They held world councils, sponsored by the Roman Empire, from Constantine's time forward, to work out positions that embody Orthodox and Catholic Christianity. And as individuals, they wrote books to which they signed their own names. No state sponsored sages' ecumenical meetings, and sages held none. Nor did the logic of sages view permit individuals to write books in their own names, respectively, as did every principal of Christianity beyond the founder himself. But had the sages of the Oral Torah met in world councils, as their counterparts in Christian theology did, these theological and social doctrines are the positions they would have taken and set forth as normative—every one of them.

To articulate the problem is simple enough. The documents convey a vast corpus of singleton-sayings, representing individual authorities. Were we to compose an account of the social teaching of Rabbinic Judaism out of such episodic evidence, we should know everything but the main thing: the shape and construction of the whole. For,

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JACOB NEUSNER

North America, Practice of Judaism in

THE Jews in the U.S.A. and Canada form an ethnic group, meaning, a group that bears in common certain indicative traits of behavior and conduct, origin and outlook. Many of the members of the Jewish ethnic group also practice the religion, Judaism. Judaism is the religion of a single people, because, by its own theology, when a person adopts the faith of Judaism and its way of life and world view, that person also enters into the social entity, "Israel," meaning in Judaism, the holy people, God's first love, to whom the Torah is revealed. But that same term, "Israel," also signifies in common usage the Jews, or, more recently, the State of Israel in the Land of Israel. Consequently, we deal with ambiguity when we speak of the Jews and Judaism and the various senses and meanings of "Israel" that circulate, quite properly, among them and in the world at large. But there is no Judaism without real people, practicing a living faith, and since the people who practice Judaism are not only Judaists—practitioners of the religion—but also, by definition, Jews who may not be Judaists at all, in trying to describe the lived and practiced religion, Judaism, in North America, we find ourselves at the boundary between religion and society.

Judaism in the U.S.A. finds definition in a variety of organized religious movements, with approximately half of all Jews who regard themselves as practitioners of Judaism identifying themselves with Reform Judaism, a third with Conservative Judaism, and perhaps ten per cent with Orthodox Judaism. In the U.S.A. Jews further form an ethnic group with a strong identification in politics—from 80 to 90% of them voting for the Democratic party in any given election. Within the ethnic group, it is estimated, of 6.5 million, approximately 4 to 4.5 million practice a form of Judaism.

THE DEMOGRAPHY OF U.S. AND CANADIAN JEWRY

Since the Jews form an ethnic group and encompass also practitioners of the religion, Judaism, in various forms, we are wise to approach the description of the practice of the religion by first taking account of the population within which the religion is practiced. In America, most Jews live in cities, indeed, in the largest metropolitan areas. We can get some idea of what this means by comparing the distribution of Jewish and non-Jewish populations in America. Consider this: 54 percent of American Jews live in the Northeast, whereas only a quarter of non-Jews live there. By contrast, about the same percentage of Jews and non-Jews live

in the Western region of the United States (17 percent of each group), and Jews are significantly under represented in the South (17 percent of Jews compared to 34 percent of non-Jews) and in the North Central region (12 percent of Jews compared to 26 percent of non-Jews). Indeed, there are only 10 states where Jews have a population size of over 100,000, and together these account for 87 percent of all U.S. Jewry. Canadian Jewry is similarly concentrated in Toronto and Montreal (there is a sizable community in Winnipeg, too).

Current social studies of Judaism in America yield a consensus that all surveys have produced.[1] The U.S.A. contains a "Jewishly identified population" of some 6,840,000. Of these, 4.2 million identify themselves as born Jews with the religion, Judaism. They embody all the Judaisms that flourish in North America. Another 1.1 million call themselves born Jews with no religion. Adults of Jewish parentage with some other religion than Judaism are 415,000. Born of Jewish parents, raised as Jewish, and converted to some other religion are 210,000. Jews by choice ("converts") are 185,000. Children under 18 being raised in a religion other than Judaism are 700,000 (Kosmin, p. 4). It follows that the "core Jewish population" is 5.5 million, of which approximately 80%—4.4 million—are Jews by religion.

The Ethnic and the Religious in U.S. and Canadian Judaism

There are Jews who are atheists and Jews who are Orthodox, and many in-between (figs. 110–113). If a Jew who does not practice Judaism converts to some religion other than Judaism, he is generally thought to have dropped out of the ethnic group. But what the books say Judaism is and how Judaism is practiced in North American Jewry do not correspond in all details. If it is to keep dietary taboos, not to eat pork or lobster or mix dairy products with meat, then many Jews—perhaps 90% of them—are excluded. And if it is to "love your neighbor as yourself" (Lev. 19:18), then while everybody tries, few succeed. Indeed, while one person who practices Judaism thinks that religious practices are vital, another, who also practices Judaism, does not.

Why these uncertainties, these contradictions in defining Jews and Judaism? Behind them lie two fundamental problems in Judaism. The first comprises the complex and at times almost oppositional relationship between ethnic and religious definitions of Judaism. All branches of Judaism select Jews along ethnic lines according to their birth. For instance, Orthodox and Conservative Judaism (terms explained below) define the Jew as a person born of a Jewish mother, and Reform Judaism, as a person born of a Jewish mother or father. But Judaism speaks of "Israel," meaning the Jewish people as Christianity speaks of "the Church." That is, religious criteria operate too. The line between the supernatural social entity, called into being by God in God's service, and the this-worldly social group, formed by people of common background and culture, is a very fine one. In Judaism it is difficult to make out.

The second problem is a by-product of this conflict between religious and ethnic definitions of Judaism: North American Jews do not agree on what Judaism is. Indeed, since being Jewish also makes a person automatically part of "Israel," meaning God's holy people, the opinions of individual Jews are often considered authoritative and even representative of Judaism. That explains why we have so many forms of Judaism. In the U.S.A. and Canada, and overseas as well, there are at least four organized forms of Judaism or, as we shall term them, four Judaisms: Orthodox, Reform, Conservative, Reconstructionist. Orthodox Judaism believes in a literal way that God gave the Torah, both written (that is, the "Old" Testament, as Christianity knows it) and oral (that is, the traditions written down after 70 C.E. and the final destruction of the temple by the rabbis who evolved to replace the priests). It keeps the law as God-given. Reform Judaism emphasizes change. It considers the Torah a statement of eternal principles in historical language and terms, and consequently believes that it can be changed to respond to new conditions. Indeed, it abandons much of the original Torah as no longer relevant. Conservative Judaism, by

contrast, affirms the God-given standing of the Torah but accommodates change. As for Reconstructionist Judaism, it sees the faith as the historical religious civilization of the Jews and identifies God in naturalist rather than supernatural terms. That is, the more recent Judaisms move further and further from the notion of Torah as their divinely inspired, authoritative text.

Moreover, although in the State of Israel only Orthodoxy is recognized by the State, Orthodox Jews in Israel and around the world, including in North America, are divided among themselves. So we have to take the classification "Orthodox Judaism" and subdivide that too. In its place stand Orthodox Judaisms, many, diverse, and fiercely competitive. All Orthodox Judaisms affirm the God-given authority of the Torah (and are therefore "Orthodox"), but they differ among themselves on how to interpret the Torah—and even on who should interpret and apply its law—as vigorously as they disagree with Reform Judaism.

The Geography of Judaism

Jews exhibit traits that indicate their social continuity and corporate cohesion in the context of their various homelands. The sociologist and demographer Calvin Goldscheider, among others, has shown that the Jews form a distinctive social group and that the indicators of their difference are sharply etched and well framed. Goldscheider writes: "A detailed examination of family, marriage, childbearing, social class, residence, occupation and education among Jews and non-Jews leads to the unmistakable conclusion that Jews are different. Their distinctiveness as a community is further reinforced by religious and ethnic forms of cohesiveness."[2]

Goldscheider's point is that although difference is defined in different ways in different places, everywhere the sense of being different, of being "unique," characterizes Jews. Of course, since difference is defined differently in different places, what makes a Jew different in one place will not mark him and not be recognized as a difference somewhere else. For instance, in America people think that bagels are a Jewish bread, or that corned beef is a Jewish dish, but to outsiders, American Jews appear to be Jewish Americans—and more American than Jewish. Similarly, in Morocco and Algeria, some forms of wheat used to be prepared in a way that Moroccans and Algerians considered specific to Jews and therefore Jewish, but in America we recognize no specifically Jewish way to prepare wheat.

What kind of traits mark the group off from others in one context and another? Family, stratification of Jewish society, and diverse characteristics of ethnicity all identify the Jews as a group distinctive in their larger social setting. Goldscheider writes:

> The distinctive features of American Jewish life imply bonds and linkages among Jews which form the multiple bases of communal continuity. These ties are structural as well as cultural; they reflect deeply embedded forms of family, educational, job and residence patterns, reinforced by religious and ethnic-communal behavior, cemented by shared lifestyles and values.[3]

That is, Jewish difference is distributed across socioeconomic patterns. It appears in the form of marriage, type of family, place of residence, degree of mobility a Jew enjoys in that society. That is, we see it in his occupation, education, economic status—his social class with its communal affiliation and identification and behavior. When we consider these phenomena, we see that Jews do exhibit qualities in common. For instance, they live together, forming Jewish neighborhoods; they work in a few specific types of occupations; they marry within the group. As a result, Americans think, for example, that psychiatry is a Jewish profession while professional football is not. By contrast, in the State of Israel, Jews are identified (as was the case in biblical times) as farmers and soldiers. None of these are inherently Jewish occupations, of course, any more than they are Norwegian. But in specific contexts they indeed indicate a person's Jewishness. And thus they justify describing the Jews as a socio-ethnic group, not merely as individuals who happen to believe the same things and so have the same religion.

The Geographical Demography of Judaism

Realizing that there are various Judaisms in the world, we ask what characterizes the practice of Judaism in various places where Jews form ethnic groups or communities. On this matter, Goldscheider observes, "The extent and variation of contemporary Judaism—the religiosity and religious commitments of Jews—defy simple definition and classification." For most Jews there is limited evidence on the degree of Jewish identification, religious practice, ritual observance, or other indicators of Judaism. This is true despite the highly organized character, e.g., congregational, institutional, of Jewish communities and synagogue and Rabbinical associations.

An examination of some rough indicators of Judaism reveals the following profile for the largest communities in the United States. National American data show that about 85 percent of the adult Jewish population in the United States identify themselves with one of the three major denominations—Orthodox, Conservative or Reform (which are generally ranked from higher to lower in intensity of religious observance). As noted above, overall, about 11 percent identify with the Orthodox, 42 percent with Conservative Judaism and 33 percent with Reform Judaism.[4]

Goldscheider points out, further, that variation in this identification and practice of Judaism is also reflected in ritual practices and synagogue attendance. Nationally, data from a 1970–71 survey showed that about 30 percent of the Jews observed the dietary rules, 13 percent attended synagogue frequently, 24 percent were members of two or more Jewish organizations. Data from New York (1981) show that about 90 percent of adult Jews attend a Passover Seder, 80 percent observe the December festival of Hanukkah, 70 percent have a *Mezuzah* (an amulet) on the doorpost of their houses as Scripture requires, 67 percent fast on Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement), 36 percent buy only kosher meats, and 30 percent keep two sets of dishes, one for meat and the other for dairy, as the Talmud requires. Few Jews attend services weekly (14 percent of the men in New York); most attend a few times a year. About 30 percent of the men never attend. Again, Jews in other American communities, particularly in the west show lower levels of ritual observance and synagogue attendance. Canadian Jewry is much like American Jewry; Orthodoxy competes with strong Reform and Conservative Judaisms there too.

How Jews View Judaism and "Being Jewish"

The distinction between the ethnic and the religious—takes on weight when we examine popular opinion on whether the Jews are a religious group, an ethnic group, a cultural group, or a nationality. Kosmin's report states (p. 28):

> Being Jewish as defined by cultural group membership is the clear preference of three of the four identity groups [Jews by birth, religion, Judaism; Jews by choice, converts; Jews by birth with no religion; born and raised Jewish, converted out; adults of Jewish parentage with another current religion]. Definition in terms of ethnic group was the second highest and was cited more frequently than the religious concept by every Jewish identity group.

Jews who thought of themselves as a religious group were 49% of those who said they were born Jews, religion Judaism; 35% of born Jews with no religion; 56% of born and raised Jews who converted out; and 40% of adults of Jewish parents with another current religion.

The further figure that affects our study—besides the 4.4 million, which defines its parameters—concerns intermarriage patterns. At this time, 68% of all currently married Jews by birth (1.7 million) are married to someone who was also born Jewish. But, in the language of Kosmin's report:

> The choice of marriage partners has changed dramatically over the past few decades. In recent years just over half of born Jews who married, at any age, whether for the first time or not, chose a spouse who was born a Gentile and has remained so, while less

> than 5% of these marriages include a non-Jewish partner who became a Jew by choice. As a result, since 1985, twice as many mixed couples, that is, born Jew with gentile spouse, have been created as Jewish couples (Jewish with Jewish spouse). This picture . . . tends to underestimate the total frequency, because it does not include currently born-Jews divorced or separated from an intermarriage nor Jew-Gentile unmarried couple relationships and living arrangements.

Wertheimer too comments on the matter of intermarriage, in these terms: "Intermarriage has exploded on the American Jewish scene since the mid-1960s, rapidly rising in incident to the point where as many as two out of five Jews who wed marry a partner who was not born Jewish." In Reform Judaism he reports, 31% of the lay leaders of Reform temples reported having a child married to a non-Jewish spouse. So the first thing that captures our attention is that the single most important building block of Judaism, the family, the expression in the here and now of the sacred genealogy of Israel, wobbles.

Religious Beliefs

Restricting our attention to the Judaists and the secular Jews (Kosmin's born Jews, religion Judaism, and his born Jews with no religion), what do we learn about religious beliefs?

[1] The Torah is the actual word of God: 13% concur (but 10% of born Jews with no religion do too, not a very impressive differential).
[2] The Torah is the inspired word of God, but not everything should be taken literally word for word: 38% of Judaists concur, and 19% of the secularists.
[3] The Torah is an ancient book of history and moral precepts recorded by man: 45% of the Judaists, 63% of the secularist Jews concur.
[4] And 4% of the Judaists and 8% of the secularists had no opinion.

By the criterion of belief in the basic proposition of the Judaism of the dual Torah, that the Torah is the word of God, 13% of the Judaists concur; another 38% agree that the Torah is the inspired word of God but not literally so; and another 45% value the Torah. If we were to posit that these numbers represent Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform Judaisms, we should not be far off the mark.

In fact, the denominational figures Kosmin's report gives are as follows (current Jewish denominational preferences of adult Jews by religion = our Judaists):

Of the Judaists, 80% are Reform or Conservative, approximately 7% Orthodox; and the high level of identification with Orthodoxy is strictly a phenomenon in the greater New York City area. Elsewhere, the percentage of Orthodox Jews in the community of Judaists is still lower (Wertheimer, p. 80). The denominational choice of the rest is scattered. A slightly earlier study by Kosmin (for 1987) divided the Jews in general as: 2% Reconstructionist, 9% Orthodox, 29 percent Reform, 34 percent Conservative, and 26 percent "other" or "just Jewish." It is not clear whether the distinction between Jews and Judaists is reflected in these figures, but the upshot is not in doubt (cf. Wertheimer, pp. 80–81).

Kosmin further observes (p. 32) that there is "a general trend of movement away from traditional Judaism. While one quarter of the born Jewish religion Judaism group was raised in Orthodox households, only 7% report themselves as Orthodox now." Not only so, but "nearly 90% of those now Orthodox were raised as such, thus indicating any movement toward Orthodoxy is relatively small. In contrast to the Orthodox, the Conservative and Reform drew heavily from one or both of the major denominations; one third of the Conservatives were raised as Orthodox, and one-quarter of the Reform as Conservative, with an additional 12% having been raised Orthodox."

Wertheimer too observes that the trend is away from Orthodoxy and from Conservatism as well and toward Reform Judaism: "Nationally, the Conservative movement still commands the allegiance of a plurality of Jews, albeit a shrinking plurality. The main beneficiary of Orthodox and Conservative losses seems to be the Reform movement" (Wertheimer, p. 80). As to synagogue affiliation, Kosmin comments (p. 37): "Synagogue affiliation is the most widespread form of formal Jewish connection, but it characterized only 41% of the entirely Jewish households."

He further notes that there is a discrepancy between calling oneself Reform and belonging to a Reform temple; "The distribution of the 860,000 households reporting synagogue membership across the denominations shows that the Reform plurality, which was evidenced in denominational preferences, does not translate directly into affiliation. By contrast, the Orthodox are more successful in affiliating their potential constituency."

	Proportion of those polled	Proportion of households
Orthodox	6.6%	16%
Conservative	37.8%	43%
Reform	42.4%	35%
Reconstructionist	1.4%	2%
Just Jewish	5.4%	

Religious Practices Among the Faithful

How about religious practice of the Judaists? Here the figures cover only three matters:

fast on the Day of Atonement	61%
attend synagogue on high holidays	59%
attend synagogue weekly	11%

Every study for several decades has replicated these results: lots of people go to Passover seders, a great many also observe the so-called High Holy Days (in the Torah: "the days of awe," that is, Rosh Hashshanah, the New Year, and Yom Hakkippurim, the Day of Atonement). So we may ask, why do people who do not participate in public prayer weekly (or daily) come to synagogue worship for the New Year and the Day of Atonement, that is to say, why do approximately half of the Judaists who worship in community at all do so only three days a year? How do they know what is fit and proper: this day, not that?[5]

Religious Practices in the Home

As to rites at home and household practices, Kosmin shifts to entirely Jewish households, as against mixed Jewish and gentile households, that is, from the Judaist to the Jewish (and a sensible shift at that):

attend Passover seder	86%
never have Christmas tree	82%
light Hanukkah candles	77%
light Sabbath candles	44%
belong to a synagogue	41%
eat kosher meat all the time	17%

What makes Passover different from all other holidays? Clearly, that question must come up first of all. What makes Sabbath candles (all the more so, the weekly Sabbath as a holy day of rest) only half so important as Hanukkah candles (one week out of the year)?

Since the Torah devotes considerable attention to the foods that may sustain the life of holy Israel, and since the ethnic Jews too identify foods as particularly Jewish, we may ask about the matter of observance of dietary rules in Conservative Judaism, which affirms them and regards them as a key-indicator of piety. Charles S. Liebman and Saul Shapiro report[6] that among the Conservative Jews they surveyed, 5% of the men and 6.4% of the women state that they observe the dietary laws both at home and away (by the standards of Conservative Judaism, which are somewhat more lenient then those of Orthodoxy); 29.2% of the men and 28.8% of the women have kosher homes but do not keep the dietary taboos away from them. Approximately a third of the Conservative homes, then, appear to be conducted in accord with the laws of kosher food. Liebman and Shapiro comment that the home of the parents of those in this group also was kosher, and observance of the dietary laws correlates with Jewish education:

> Of the children receiving a day school education, 66% come from kosher homes; of all those who attended Camp Ramah [a Jewish educational summer camp run by

> the Conservative movement], 53% came from kosher homes; this despite the fact that only 34% of the parents report their homes are kosher. The differences are even more dramatic if one bears in mind that a disproportionate number of older Conservative synagogue members have kosher homes, which means that their children were educated at a time when day school education was much less widespread in the Jewish community.

Essential Religious Practices in North American Judaism

Along these same lines Steven M. Cohen introduces the metaphor of "an artichoke syndrome," where, he says, "the outer layers of the most traditional forms of Jewish expression are peeled away until only the most essential and minimal core of involvement remains, and then that also succumbs to the forces of assimilation . . . according to assimilationist expectations, ritual observance and other indicators of Jewish involvement decline successively from parents to children."[7] But current studies do not "support a theory predicting uniform decline in ritual practice from one generation to the next. Rather, it suggest intergenerational flux with a limited movement toward a low level of observance entailing Passover Seder attendance, Hanukkah candle lighting, and fasting on Yom Kippur."[8] In yet other studies, Steven M. Cohen speaks of "moderately affiliated Jews," who nearly-unanimously "celebrate High Holidays, Hanukkah and Passover, belong to synagogues when their children approach age 12 and 13, send their children to afternoon school or Sunday school, and at least occasionally support the Federation ['UJA'] campaigns."[9]

Cohen speaks of "broad affection for Jewish family, food, and festivals." Here, Cohen's report provides especially valuable data. He explains "why Jews feel so affectionate toward their holidays:"

> One theme common to the six items [celebrated by from 70 to over 90% surveyed] is family. Holidays are meaningful because they connect Jews with their family-related memories, experiences, and aspirations. Respondents say that they want to be with their families on Jewish holidays, that they recall fond childhood memories at those times, and that they especially want to connect their own children with Jewish traditions at holiday time. Moreover, holidays evoke a certain transcendent significance; they have ethnic and religious import; they connect one with the history of the Jewish people, and they bear a meaningful religious message. Last, food . . . constitutes a major element in Jews' affection for the holidays.[10]

The holidays that are most widely celebrated in this report remain the same as in the others: Passover, Hanukkah, and the High Holy Days. By contrast, "relatively few respondents highly value three activities: observing the Sabbath, adult Jewish education, and keeping kosher." The question comes to the fore once again: why those rites and not others, why those rites in preference to others?

How about Israeli matters? Among the Judaists, 31% have visited the State of Israel, 35% have close family or friends living there; among the ethnic-Jews (not Judaists), the figures are 11% and 20%. Here is another question: what makes the State of Israel so important to the Judaists?

And, along the same lines come charity, including Israel-centered charity (UJA for instance) (once more speaking of entirely Jewish households:

contributed to a Jewish charity in 1989	62%
contributed to UJA/Federation campaign in 1989	45%
celebrated Israeli independence day	18%

And, for comparison:

contributed to a secular charity in 1989	67%
contributed to a political campaign in 1988–1990	36%

Commenting on the Kosmin report, Ari L. Goldman (New York Times, Friday, June 7, 1991), commented, "In a radical change from just a generation ago, American Jews today are as likely to marry non-Jews as Jews. But even as this assimilation accelerates, Jews are clinging to religious traditions."

The State of Contemporary Jewish Religious Life

Covering a variety of issues, Jack Wertheimer proposes to "evaluate the state of contemporary Jewish religious life" (Wertheimer, p. 63), with special attention to changing patterns of religious observance, which concern this inquiry into the contrast between book-Judaism and practiced Judaism. Orthodoxy, conceded by all parties to be closest in popular observance to the Judaism described in the holy books, retains its young people, but at the same time loses its older population, a disproportionately large component of its numbers, to death, with from two to three times as many Orthodox Jews over age 65 as between 18 and 45; so the gap between the books as lived by everyday Jews and the conduct of the generality of Jews is growing wider. Synagogue attendance rates vary, but decline. In the early 1980s, Wertheimer says, approximately 44 percent of Americans claimed they attended services weekly, and 24 percent of American Jews did; but that figure is high. Wertheimer says, "In most communities between one third and one-half of all Jews attend religious services either never or only on the High Holy Days" (p. 85).

Dividing the country by communities, e.g., New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore Washington, St. Louis, Miami, and the like, yields various statistics on diverse religious practices. For the sake of simplifying the picture—for the variations are not formidable—we shall review Wertheimer's "practice of selected observances, by community" (pp. 88ff.):

These figures show a fair amount of variation, but, overall, confirm the impressions formed in the Kosmin study. Some religious practices are widespread, others not. Not only so, but if we distinguish, as Kosmin does, between those who say they are Jews by religion and those who say they are not, the probability is that the percentages of Judaists who practice the rites listed here is higher than indicated.

The available figures rarely tell us about other rites. For instance, what percentage of Jews who marry other Jews and who also identify as Judaists marry in a Judaic rite, and what percentage do not? So too, what percentage of Jews circumcise their sons, and, if they do so, do they do so eight days after birth, through the offices of a ritual circumciser (mohel), or do they use a doctor and pass on the religious rite altogether? Here we have some intriguing data. Cohen notes,[11] that:

	New York	Philadelphia	St. Louis	Phoenix	Rochester
attends seder	89%	89%	71%	81%	80%
lights Hanukkah candles	76%	78%	80%	78%	78%
has mezuzah	70%	71%	76%	57%	NA
fasts on Yom Kippur	67%	67%	NA	NA	63%
lights Sabbath candles	37%	32%	28%	NA	33%
buys only kosher meat	36%	NA	19%	NA	NA
uses two sets of dishes, meat and dairy	30%	16%	15%	9%	23%
handles no money on the Sabbath	12%	NA	NA	4%	NA
refrains from transport on the Sabbath	NA	5%	5%	4%	NA
has Christmas tree (sometimes or frequently)	NA	NA	14%	NA	15%

> a large proportion, 55%, of respondents say it is extremely important that their children have sons ritually circumcised; another 18% say it is very important. These proportions far exceed those on marrying another Jew—33% say marrying another Jew is extremely important for their children, as opposed to the 55% for circumcising their grandsons.

The upshot is somewhat curious: grandparents are more concerned that their grandsons be circumcised than that their sons marry Jewish women; since the child of a gentile woman is, in the law of Judaism, gentile, it turns out that these grandparents favor the circumcision of (specified) gentiles as part of what "a good Jew" wants. We shall return to that anomaly in due course.

What percentage of Jews are buried by a rabbi and buried in a Jewish cemetery, what percentage of Judaists have Judaic last rites, and so forth? Here we rely on guess work, but the naked eye strongly suggests that most Jews who marry other Jews have a religious rite for the wedding; most Judaists are buried with Judaic rites; the rite of circumcision tends, among Reform Jews, to be transformed into a (merely) surgical operation, but is exceedingly common among American Jews. These and other impressions do not have the same authority as the results of the surveys just now quoted. They suffice to suggest that Judaists practice rites of passage—circumcision or some other rite at the birth of a child (synagogue service for naming sons and daughters, for instance); bar or bat mitzvah (for boys and girls respectively); marriage by a rabbi and a cantor under a Judaic marriage canopy; Jewish burial. Add to this very high levels of observance of Passover, Hanukkah, and some other home rites, and we form the impression of a religion that enjoys substantial everyday observance of rites that involve the family (rites of passage) and the home (Passover).

Alongside these rites of family and home, it would be a considerable error to ignore certain broadly practiced activities that characterize Jews in America and that form a major, public component of their community. Philanthropic and political activities, for instance, are carried out under a deeply Judaic aspect, frequently explained within the framework of Judaism. So there is a public and communal Judaism, as much as Judaism for home and family, which must be taken into account as we describe the practices of Jews in North America.

The Moderately Affiliated; the Center in U.S. and Canadian Judaism

To describe the large center of American Jews, those who are both ethnically Jewish and religiously Judaic—estimated by Steven M. Cohen to number about half of the American Jews—we may use the terms Cohen has provided. He gives these generalizations that pertain to our problem:[12]

> The moderately affiliated are proud of their identity as Jews, of Jews generally, and of Judaism.
>
> They combine universalist and particularist impulses; they are ambivalent about giving public expression to their genuinely felt attachment to things Jewish.
>
> They are especially fond of the widely celebrated Jewish holidays as well as the family experiences and special foods that are associated with them.
>
> They celebrate High Holidays, Hanukkah and Passover as well as most major American civic holidays . . .
>
> They vest importance in those Jewish activities they perform; and they regard those activities they fail to undertake as of little import. Accordingly, they are happy with themselves as Jews; they believe they are "good Jews."
>
> Their primary Jewish goal for their children is for them to maintain Jewish family continuity . . .
>
> The Holocaust and anti-Semitism are among the most powerful Jewish symbols . . .
>
> The moderately affiliated believe God exists, but they have little faith in an active and personal God.
>
> They are voluntarists, they affirm a right to select those Jewish customs they regard as personally meaningful, and unlike many intensive Jews, most of the moderately affiliated reject the obligatory nature of halakhah [laws, norms].
>
> They endorse broad, abstract principles of Jewish life (such as knowing the fundamentals of Judaism) but fail to support narrower, more concrete normative demands (such as regular text study or sending their children to Jewish day schools).
>
> The moderately affiliated prefer in-marriage but fail to oppose out-marriage with a great sense of urgency.
>
> They support [the State of] Israel, but only as a subordinate concern, one lacking

any significant influence on the private sphere of Jewish practice.

To the moderately affiliated, "good Jews" are those who affiliate with other Jews and Jewish institutions.

We have before us the description of a mass of Judaists, who in some ways conform, and in other ways do not conform, to book-Judaism. Their religion presents us with a problem of interpretation: how do these people know the difference between what matters and what doesn't, not only Passover as against Pentecost (Shabuot) fifty days later; but circumcision as against intermarriage; the Holocaust and anti-Semitism as against the State of Israel; the existence of God as against God's active caring? The key lies in Cohen's description: "they affirm a right to select."

American Judaism of Holocaust and Redemption

Another self-evidently valid Judaism, besides the Judaism that all "good Jews" agree defines the norm, flourishes in North America. It is different from the Judaists' Judaism, and we also know it is practiced, alongside the Judaists' Judaism, by nearly all Judaists, as well as by the generality of Jews not Judaists. The key figures come in the following form:

contributed to a Jewish charity in 1989	62%
contributed to UJA/Federation campaign in 1989	45%

Add to this list political action in behalf of the State of Israel, e.g., contributing to a lobby such as American-Israel Political Action Committee ("AIPAC"), writing letters to members of Congress, voting for candidates who favor the State of Israel and against those who oppose it, and you have a set of actions not primary to or not known in book-Judaism, but very important for Judaists as much as for Jews. And, since these activities not only define traits of "good Jews," and so enjoy such normative status as exists in Judaism in North America, they have to be seen as practical actions that express deeply-held convictions and formative attitudes: rites of some kind. So we turn to the question of another Judaism, moving from the rites, rapidly considered, to the tale of transcendence that turns an action into a rite, and a story into a narrative bearing transcendent meaning.

"The Holocaust" of the Judaism of Holocaust and Redemption refers to the murder of six million Jewish children, women, and men in Europe in 1933 through 1945 by the Germans. "The Redemption" is the creation of the State of Israel. Both events constitute essentially political happenings; a government did the one, a state and government emerged from the other. And both events involved collectivities acting in the realm of public policy. "The Holocaust" then corresponds in the here and now to anti-Semitism, exclusion, alienation, which Jews experience solely by reason of being Jewish. And, while authentic anti-Semitism—hatred of Jews as the cause of all evil, loathing of Judaism as a wicked religion, pointing to Jews as the source of every disaster—flourishes only on the lunatic fringe of politics, on the one side, and in certain circles of racist ideologues, white and black, on the other, the experience of difference is a commonplace and routine experience for North American Jews—and that is by definition! The one shared, public, corporate, communal experience all Jews have is that they are different from gentiles. The Judaism of the dual Torah explains that difference as destiny and invokes the covenant to explain it, the category of sanctification to justify it. The Judaism of Holocaust and Redemption explains that difference differently. But while only some Jews find a correspondence between covenant and imagined status as God's holy people, all Jews see themselves on a continuum with the Holocaust: if I were there, I too would have been gassed and cremated.

So to state this Judaism in a few words: the world view of the Judaism of Holocaust and Redemption stresses the unique character of the murders of European Jews, the providential and redemptive meaning of the creation of the State of Israel. The Judaism of Holocaust and Redemption accordingly requires active work in raising money and political support for the State of Israel.

Different from Zionism, which held that Jews should live in a Jewish State, this system serves, in particular, to give Jews living in America a reason and an explanation for being Jewish. This Judaism therefore lays particular stress on the complementarity of the political experiences of mid-twentieth century Jewry: the mass murder in death factories of six million of the Jews of Europe, and the creation of the State of Israel three years after the end of the massacre. These events, together seen as providential, as we see, bear the names Holocaust, for the murders, and redemption, for the formation of the State of Israel in the aftermath. The system as a whole presents an encompassing transcendent message, linking one event to the other as an instructive pattern and moves Jews to follow a particular set of actions, rather than other sorts, as it tells them why they should be Jewish. In all, the civil religion of Jewry addresses issues of definition of the group and the policies it should follow to sustain its on-going life and protect its integrity.

So how do we know one Judaism from another, and, in this setting, how shall we tell one set of Judaists from another? We distinguish one Judaism from another by examining the myth, ritual, and symbolic structure of a Judaic system and comparing the results with the myth, ritual, and symbolic structure of another Judaic system. And we are not going to tell one set of Judaists from another, for we shall soon realize that each Judaism addresses a distinct range of social experience; the Judaism that emerges from the holy books predominates at home and in the family, reshaping life-cycle events; the other Judaism addresses the experience of people not at home or in private but in their lives together and in community. So the one Judaism, with its rituals and transcendent tale, explains one component of the social world, the other, a different component of that same social world, and the same Judaists who worship on the Day of Atonement *but* not on the Sabbath are the ones who support the State of Israel *but* do not go to live there. In each case, "good Jews" know how to pick and choose. But each of the two Judaisms serves in its place, to make sense of its assigned realm of human experience, the private and the public, respectively.

The ritual of that other Judaism involves political action and enormous communal organization and activity. Its counterpart to the Day of Atonement is the fund raising dinner of the local Jewish Federation and Welfare Fund and United Jewish Appeal campaign for the State of Israel and other Jewish causes. Its counterpart to the bar or bat mitzvah is a summer vacation in the State of Israel. Its equivalent to the intense moments of marriage and death is the pilgrimage to Auschwitz followed by a flight to Jerusalem and procession to the Western wall in Jerusalem. Its places of worship comprise Holocaust Museums, and its moments of celebration, commemorations of the Holocaust on a day set aside for that purpose. Its "study of the Torah" involves visits to Holocaust Museums and courses on the German war against the Jews and the death factories of Europe. Its memorial of the destruction of the Temple finds expression in recitations of how the Germans massacred these Jews by firing squads, those by asphyxiation, and the others by driving them into a barn and setting it on fire, men, women, and children. These things really happened, of course, but long ago and far away, just as Sinai really happened, long ago too. But recovered by memory, they live and inform, just as much as Sinai is constantly remembered in the Torah, in the covenant.

The power of the Judaism of Holocaust and Redemption differs not at all in its appeal to facts reconstituted in vivid imagination, that is, the power of memory; but the memories are different. Memory is evoked by rite when social experience corresponds to the message of the rite, and the received tradition remains inert when nothing in our experience makes its message plausible. In the case of the Judaism of Holocaust and Redemption the experience to which it appeals for plausibility is immediate, and it accurately replicates, in the language of history, a felt social experience of Jews in North America: their sense that difference far from defining destiny shades over into disability and discrimination. Holocaust states in extreme form what

gentiles are capable of doing and have done to Jews. And Redemption provides the remission of the horror of history.

But why is it that the Judaism of the books, that is, the Judaism of the dual Torah, finds a firm position in the shared imagination of Judaists in one part of the social order, the familiar and personal and private, while the Judaism of Holocaust and Redemption occupies the center of the social order that is public, corporate, and communal? Judaic public behavior extends to what is communal, public, and corporate: "contribute to Jewish charity," "give to UJA." And Judaists also are activists in Jewry when shared and public action of a political character is demanded of "all good Jews." The consensus of Judaists focuses upon corporate as much as private dimensions of the social order. It is not that Judaism has been privatized and individualized at all. Rather a distinct Judaism, one that answers another sort of questions altogether, has taken shape and has entered the center of public life and activity, taking the place of those elements of the program of public life and activity set forth by the received, book-Judaism.

So the appearance of indifference to the corporate dimensions of the holy life of book-Judaism should not deceive us. Not only do Jews form a corporate community and share a substantial range of social experience. That shared public life itself takes shape in response to a Judaism and forms a religious system—but it is not the same Judaism, the same religious system, that governs in private life. The reason is that this other Judaism answers the urgent questions that the community at large asks itself, and, it follows, its answers are found self-evidently true, therefore its rites predominate, and other rites for the community fall by the way.

That shared social experience in politics also takes form in transformations of the given into a gift, so that the *is* of the everyday polity shades into the *as if* of another time and place, as much as is the case in the transformation by the Judaism of the dual Torah of the passage of the individual through the cycle of life. We shall now see that American and Canadian Jews in politics as much as in private life see themselves in the model of an imagined paradigm, one in substance different from, but in structure the same as, the Passover Seder, that is, "as if they were liberated." Jews conduct public business with remarkable unanimity, as though they were somewhere else and someone else than where and what they are. Specifically, in politics, history, in society, even in economics, Jews in North America may not only point to shared traits and experience but also claim to exhibit a viewpoint in common that leads to readily discerned patterns of belief and behavior.

American and Canadian Jews do share a transforming perspective, which imparts to their public, as much as to their private, vision a different set of spectacles from those worn by everybody else in the sheltering society of America or Canada. There is not only a Jewish-ethnic, but a Judaic-religious corporate experience out there in public life, and, while it self-evidently does not lead to the synagogue, it does enchant vision and change perspective and persons. There are cosmic narratives and rites to which people respond, even though they are not those of the received Judaism. And the Judaic system that takes the place, in the life of the community at large, of the received Judaism indeed occupies its share of the place reserved for the unique, the self-evident truths beyond argument.

What is this other Judaism, the Judaism of Holocaust and Redemption? In politics, history, in society, Jews in North America respond to the Judaism of the Holocaust and Redemption in such a way as to imagine they are someone else, living somewhere else, at another time and circumstance. That vision transforms families into an Israel, a community. The somewhere else is Poland in 1944, on the one hand, and the earthly Jerusalem, on the other, and the vision turns them from reasonably secure citizens of America or Canada into insecure refugees finding hope and life in the land, and State, of Israel. Public events commemorate, so that "we" were there in "Auschwitz," which stands for all of the centers for the murder of Jews, and "we" share, too, in the everyday life of that faraway place in which we do not live but should, the State of Israel.

That transformation of time and of place, no less than the recasting accomplished by the Passover Seder or the rite of *berit milah*—circumcision—or *huppah*—marriage—turns people into something other than what they are in the here and now.

The issues of this public Judaism, the civil religion of North American Jewry are perceived to be political. That means, the questions to which this Judaism provides answers are raised by peoples' public and social experience, not the experience of home and family and the passage through life from birth to death. But the power of that Judaism to turn things into something other than what they seem, to teach lessons that change the everyday into the remarkable—that power works as does the power of the other Judaism to make me Adam or one of the people of Israel who crossed the Red Sea.

The lessons of the two Judaisms, of course, are not the same. The Judaism of the dual Torah teaches about the sanctification of the everyday in the road toward the salvation of the holy people. The Judaism of Holocaust and Redemption tells me that the everyday—the here and the now of home and family—ends not in a new Eden but in a cloud of gas; that salvation lies today, if I will it, but not here and not now. And it teaches me not only not to trouble to sanctify, but also not even to trust, the present circumstance.

The transcendent message of the Judaism of Holocaust and Redemption comes to expression in the words of the great theologian of the Judaism of Holocaust and Redemption, Emil Fackenheim, who maintains that "the Holocaust" has produced an eleventh commandment, "Not to hand Hitler any more victories." The commanding voice of Sinai gave Ten Commandments, the commanding voice of Auschwitz, that eleventh. The Ten call for us to become like God in the ways in which the image of God may be graven, which is, by keeping the Sabbath and honoring the other and having no other gods but God. The eleventh tells us what we must not do; it appeals not to love God but to spite a man. So does politics transform. The Judaism of Holocaust and Redemption supplies the words that make another world of this one. Those words moreover, change the assembly of like-minded individuals into occasions for the celebration of the group and the commemoration of its shared memories.

Not only so, but events defined, meetings called, moments identified as distinctive and holy, by that Judaism of Holocaust and Redemption mark the public calendar and draw people from home and family to collectivity and community—those events, and, except for specified reasons, not the occasions of the sacred calendar of the synagogue, that is, the life of Israel as defined by the Torah. Just as in the U.S.A. religions address the realm of individuals and families while a civil religion defines public discourse on matters of value and ultimate concern, so the Judaism of the dual Torah forms the counterpart to Christianity, and the Judaism of Holocaust and Redemption constitutes Jewry's civil religion.

That explains how the Judaism of Holocaust and Redemption affirms and explains in this-worldly terms the Jews' distinctiveness. When did this Judaism come to the fore? It forms, within Jewry, a chapter in a larger movement of ethnic assertion in America. Attaining popularity in the late 1960s, the Judaism of Holocaust and Redemption came to the surface at the same time that black assertion, Italo-American and Polish-American affirmation, feminism, and movements for self-esteem without regard to sexual preference attained prominence. That movement of rediscovery of difference responded to the completion of the work of assimilation to American civilization and its norms.

Once people spoke English without a foreign accent, the could think about learning Polish or Yiddish or Norwegian once more. It then became safe and charming. Just as when black students demanded what they deemed ethnically characteristic food, so Jewish students discovered they wanted kosher food too. In that context the Judaism of Holocaust and Redemption came into sharp focus, with its answers to unavoidable questions deemed to relate to public policy: who are we? Why should we be Jewish? What does it mean to be Jewish? How do we relate to Jews in other times

and places? What is "Israel" Meaning the State of Israel to us, and what are we to it? Who are we in American society? These and other questions form the agenda for the Judaism of Holocaust and Redemption.

The power of the Judaism of the Holocaust and Redemption to frame Jews' public policy—to the near-exclusion of the Judaism of the dual Torah—may be shown very simply. The Holocaust formed the question, redemption in the form of the creation of the State of Israel, the answer, for all universally-appealing Jewish public activity and discourse. Synagogues except for specified occasions appeal to a few, but activities that express the competing Judaism appeal to nearly everybody. That is to say, nearly all American Jews identify with the State of Israel and regard its welfare as more than a secular good, but a metaphysical necessity: the other chapter of the Holocaust. Nearly all American Jews are more than just supporters of the State of Israel. They also regard their own "being Jewish" as inextricably bound up with the meaning they impute to the Jewish state. In many ways every day of their lives these Jews relive the terror-filled years in which European Jews were wiped out—*and every day they do something about it.*

It is as if people spent their lives trying to live out a cosmic myth, and, through rites of expiation and regeneration, accomplished the goal of purification and renewal. Access to the life of feeling and experience, to the way of life that made one distinctive without leaving the person terribly different from everybody else—emerged in the Judaic system of Holocaust and Redemption. The Judaism of Holocaust and Redemption presents an immediately accessible message, cast in extreme emotions of terror and triumph, its round of endless activity demanding only spare time. That Judaism realizes in a poignant way the conflicting demands of Jewish Americans to be intensely Jewish, but only once in a while, providing a means of expressing difference in public and in politics while not exacting much of a cost in meaningful everyday difference from others.

At issue, therefore, is not whether Jews see and do things together. They do. At issue is whether or not they do *religious* things together, and still more concretely why they share or appeal and respond to some, but not other, religious things. For the realm of the sacred touches their passage through life and draws them into contact with others principally through home and family. What people do together and share also passes under the transforming power of imagination. What they do not share is not subject to that metamorphosis of vision that changes the *is* into the *what if?* Everything that, in the religious life of Judaism, works its wonder for the generality of Jews proves personal and familial, not communal—and that despite the remarkable facts of Jewish distinctiveness within the larger society of America and, all the more so, Canada. The social experience forms the premise of the religious life.

But the Jews' social experience of polity and community does not match the religious experience of home and family. Hence the religious side to things conforms to the boundaries of family, and the public experience of politics, economics, and society that Jews share comes to expression in quite different ways altogether. Two fundamental reasons explain the present state of affairs, which finds the religion, Judaism, intensely affective in the private life and remarkably irrelevant to the public. The one is the prevailing attitude toward religion and its correct realm, the other is the Jews' reading of their experience of the twentieth century, which has defined as the paramount mode of interpreting social experience a paradigm other than that deriving from the life of that Israel that is the holy people of mind and imagination, therefore also of sanctification and salvation.

If the received Judaism thrives in the private life of home and family, where, in general, religion in North America is understood to work its wonders, that other Judaism makes its way in the public arena, where, in general, politics and public policy, viewed as distinct from religion, function. That other Judaism, the one of Holocaust and Redemption rather than Eden, Sinai, and the World to Come, we recognize, is political in its themes and character, cosmic truth and rites. The world view of the Judaism of Holocaust and Redemption evokes

political, historical events—the destruction of the Jews in Europe, the creation of the state of Israel, two events of a wholly political character. It treats these events as unique, just as the Judaism of the dual Torah treats Eden and Adam's fall, Sinai, and the coming redemption, as unique. It finds in these events the ultimate meaning of the life of the Jews together as Israel, and it therefore defines an Israel for itself—the State of Israel in particular—just as the Judaism of the dual Torah finds in Eden, Sinai, and the World to Come the meaning of the life of Israel and so defines for itself an Israel too: the holy Israel, the social entity different in its very essence from all other social entities. That other Judaism, the Judaism of Holocaust and Redemption, addresses the issues of politics and public policy that Jews take up in their collective social activity.

Why This, Not That, in the Practice of Judaism in North America

The catalogue of rites and myths North American Jews neglect or dismiss exceeds—and also in anomalous ways simply differs from—the list of beliefs and practices that, for Judaists, define "a good Jew." That single sentence could easily suffice to state the message of this chapter, if the conventional agenda sufficed. But at stake is not a list of this and that, but a principle of differentiation, and, for that purpose, we require both a generalization and an example thereof.

1) Judaists identify with the religious world of the Judaism of the dual Torah experiences of the individual that are plausibly transformed in rites of passage and events in the home and family into encounters with transcendence. That is why the social imagination of Jewry engages with Judaism in its narrative of the rites of the passage through life, on the one side, and of a social experience mediating between home and family and the sheltering world, on the other. Circumcision and the Passover banquet-Seder bear in common a single social referent: family, home, and experiences of essentially private life. The theological message of the rites corresponds to the social experience of the faithful that practice those rites.

2) Rites that focus on community and public affairs, by contrast, fail because they invoke in common another social referent: society beyond individual and family. So there is one set of social experiences that correspond to the myth and ritual of individual, home, and family; there is another set of social experiences that correspond to the transcendent tale and ritual of corporate Jewry, Israel all together. And they do not seem to match, intersecting in many people's lives to be sure, but hardly corresponding in the essentials of symbol, myth, and ritual.

In Protestant North America people commonly see religion as something personal and private; prayer, for example, therefore speaks for the individual. No wonder, then, that those enchanted words and gestures that, for their part, Jews adopt transform the inner life, recognize life's transitions and turn them into rites of passage. It is part of a larger prejudice that religion and rite speak to the heart of the particular person. What can be changed by rite then is first of all personal and private, not social, not an issue of culture, not affective in politics, not part of the public interest. What people do when they respond to religion, therefore, affects an interior world—a world with little bearing on the realities of public discourse: what—in general terms—should we do about nuclear weapons or in terms of Judaism how we should organize and imagine society? The transformations of religion do not involve the world, or even of the self as representative of other selves, but mainly the individual at the most unique and unrepresentative. If God speaks to me in particular, then the message, by definition, is mine, not someone else's. Religion, the totality of these private messages (within the present theory) therefore does not make itself available for communication in public discourse, and that by definition too. Religion plays no public role. It is a matter not of public activity but of what people happen to believe or do in private, a matter mainly of the heart.

When religion addresses what actually

happens to people living together, and when the message it conveys conforms to their sense of self-evidence (that is the same thing twice), then religion governs. What the books say will accurately describe what the people do. When religion pertains, but its message jars, what the books say people may do, but they may not to it in the way the books direct. And when the social order and the religious system do not correspond at all, then people will conclude "good Jews do this, not that." So religion lives in the perceived, social experience that people have; its ideas prove not right or wrong, not even persuasive or implausible, but self-evidently true because they are descriptive, or obviously irrelevant because they are not descriptive, of the world as lived out in the social world. Conscience is the creation of community, theological truth subject to the disposition of common sense, that is to say, a sense of what is fitting and just made common by being shared.

The rites that speak to the subjectivity and individuality of circumstance lay stress on private person, recognize and accord priority to the autonomous individual. What people find personally relevant they accept; for them, the words evoke meaning and make worlds. The rites that speak to the community out there beyond family, to the corporate existence of people who see themselves as part of a social entity beyond, scarcely resonate. The context therefore accounts for the difference and even for variations. Jews live one by one, family by family. Words that speak to that individuality work wonders. Jews do not form a corporate community but only families. Words that address the commonality of Israel not as the congregation of individual Jews but as a community bound by law to do some things together, fall unheard, mere magic, not wonder-working at all.

Jews respond to the holy occasions that speak of the individual including the family, while they have difficulty dealing with the ones that address the collectivity of public experience then pertains not to Jews alone but to life in the open society created by Protestant Christianity and shared by Protestants with all comers, on terms of rough equality. The enchantment wrought by life in the democratic West should not be missed: the "I" even before God remains always the "I," and the "we" is just that many "I"s formed into families—only that, not something more *and something else*. Israel before God is made up of Israelites, individual and family, counted solely one by one, family by family. For the sum of the whole is merely the same as the parts. But it is magic that makes the whole greater than the sum of the parts.

In North America Judaism as a religion encompasses what is personal and familial. But that definition of religion proves insufficient to cover Judaic religious systems that flourish. The Jews as a political entity put forth a separate system, one that concerns not religion, which is not supposed to intervene in political action, but public policy. Judaism in public policy produces political action in favor of the State of Israel, or Soviet Jewry, or other important matters of the corporate community. Judaism in private affects the individual and the family and is not supposed to play a role in politics at all. That pattern conforms to the Protestant model of religion, and the Jews have accomplished conformity to it by the formation of two Judaisms. A consideration of the Protestant pattern, which separates not the institutions of Church from the activities of the state, but the entire public polity from the inner life, will show us how to make sense of the choices that characterize the practice of Judaism in North America.

Religion is understood in Protestant North America as something private and interior, individual and subjective: how I feel all by myself, not what I do with other people. Religion is something you believe, all by yourself, not something you do with other people. The prevailing attitude of mind identifies religion with belief, to the near-exclusion of behavior. Religion is understood as a personal state of mind or an individual's personal and private attitude. When we study religion, the present picture suggests, we ask about not society but self, not about culture and community but about conscience and character. Religion speaks of individuals and not groups: faith

and its substance, and, beyond faith, the things that faith represents: faith reified, hence, religion. William Scott Green further comments in more general terms as follows:

> The basic attitude of mind characteristic of the study of religion holds that religion is certainly in your soul, likely in your heart, perhaps in your mind, but never in your body. That attitude encourages us to construe religion cerebrally and individually, to think in terms of beliefs and the believer, rather than in terms of behavior and community. The lens provided by this prejudice draws our attention to the intense and obsessive belief called "faith," so religion is understood as a state of mind, the object of intellectual or emotional commitment, the result of decisions to believe or to have faith. According to this model, people have religion but they do not do their religion. Thus we tend to devalue behavior and performance, to make it epiphenomenal and of course to emphasize thinking and reflecting, the practice of theology, as a primary activity of religious people. . . . The famous slogan that "ritual recapitulates myth" follows this model by assigning priority to the story and to peoples' believing the story, and makes behavior simply an imitation, an aping, a mere acting out.[13]

Now as we reflect on Green's observations, we of course recognize what is at stake. It is the definition of religion, or, rather, what matters in or about religion, emerging from Protestant theology and Protestant religious experience. For when we lay heavy emphasis on faith to the exclusion of works, on the individual to rather than on society, conscience instead of culture, when we treat behavior and performance by groups as less important and thinking, reflecting, theology and belief as more important, we simply adopt as normative for academic scholarship convictions critical to the Protestant Reformation. Judaisms in their historical expressions place emphasis at least equally on religion as a matter of works and not faith alone, behavior and community as well as belief and conscience. Religion is something that people do, and they do it together. Religion is not something people merely have, as individuals. But in the context in which religion is personal and subjective, not public and shared, the practice of Judaism in North America fits well.

Jacob Neusner

Notes

[1] I consulted a variety of books and articles, but mainly rely upon Steven M. Cohen, *Content or Continuity? Alternative Bases for Commitment* (New York, 1991), Jack Wertheimer, "Recent Trends in American Judaism," *American Jewish Yearbook, 1989* (New York and Philadelphia, 1989) (from this point: Wertheimer); and Barry A. Kosmin, Sidney Goldstein, Joseph Waksberg, Nava Lerer, Ariella Keysar, and Jeffrey Scheckner, *Highlights of the CJF [Council of Jewish Federations]* 1990 National Jewish Population Survey (N.Y.: Council of Jewish Federations, 1991) (from this point: Kosmin). Michael Satlow provided, in addition, these items: M. Sklare and J. Greenbaum, *Jewish Identity on the Suburban Frontier: A Study of Group Survival in the Open Society* (New York, 1967), pp. 49–96; Charles Liebman and S. Shapiro, "A Survey of the Conservative Movement and Some of its Religious Attitudes" (unpublished; dated N.Y., 1979), pp. 17–24; Samuel Heilman and Steven M. Cohen, *Cosmopolitans and Parochials: Modern Orthodox Jews in America* (New York, 1987), pp. 39–111, 207–216, 222–227, 235–244; Samuel Heilman and Steven M. Cohen, "Ritual Variation among Modern Orthodox Jews in the United States," in *Studies in Contemporary Jewry* (Jerusalem, 1986) 2:164–187; and S. Cohen, *American Assimilation or Jewish Revival?* (Bloomington, 1988), pp. 71–81, 130. Professor Calvin Goldscheider provided the following: Calvin Goldscheider, "Jewish Individuals and Jewish Communities: Using Survey Data to Measure the Quality of American Jewish Life" (Unpublished MS, prepared for the Third Sidney Hollander Memorial Conference on Policy Implications of the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey, July, 1991); Calvin Goldscheider, "The Structural Context of American Jewish Continuity: Social Class, Ethnicity, and Religion" (unpublished paper, presented at the American Sociological Association, Cincinnati, 1991). Note also Gary A. Tobin, "From Alarms to Open Arms," in *Hadassah Magazine*, December, 1991, pp. 22ff.; Arthur J. Magida, "The Pull of Passover," in *Baltimore Jewish Times* April 17, 1992, pp. 58ff.; Samuel C. Heilman, *Jewish Unity and Diversity. A Survey of American Rabbis and Rabbinical Students* (New York, 1991).

[2] Calvin Goldscheider, *Jewish Continuity and Change. Emerging Patterns in America* (Bloomington, 1986), p. 170.

[3] Ibid., p. 171.

[4] There is, of course, variation in denominational identification within the United States. In 1981, for example, the distribution in New York, the largest Jewish community in the world, was

13 percent Orthodox, 35 percent Conservative and 29 percent Reform. About one-fourth of New York Jews define themselves denominationally as either "other" or "none." In St. Louis, there were fewer Conservative Jews but more Reform Jews. In the western states the proportion Reform and "other-none" tends to be higher.

[5] This question and the similar ones posed in the following sections are answered at the end of this chapter.

[6] In "A Survey of the Conservative Movement and Some of its Religious Attitudes," Unpublished MS dated September, 1979; Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America.

[7] Steven M. Cohen, *American Assimilation or Jewish Revival?*, p. 80.

[8] *American Assimilation or Jewish Revival?*, p. 81.

[9] Steven M. Cohen, *Content or Continuity? Alternative Bases for Commitment* (New York, 1991), p. 4. Cohen distinguishes between "the Jewish-identity patterns of the more involved and passionate elites from those of the more numerous, marginally affiliated Jews, those with roughly average levels of Jewish involvement and emotional investment. . . . One may be called 'commitment to content' and the other 'commitment to continuity.' alternatively . . . 'commitment to ideology' versus 'commitment to identity.'"

[10] Pp. 14–15.

[11] *Content or Continuity*, p. 21.

[12] *Content or Continuity*, pp. 41–2.

[13] Personal letter, January 17, 1985.

Numbers in Judaism

The book of Numbers is mediated to Judaism by Sifre to Numbers, ca. 300 C.E. Sifre to Numbers provides a miscellaneous reading of most of the book of Numbers, but examining the implicit propositions of the recurrent forms of the document yields a clear-cut purpose. The document follows no topical program; but it also is unlike Mekhilta Attributed to R. Ishmael because of its recurrent effort to prove a few fundamental points. True, these are general and not limited to a given set of cases or issues, so that the successive compositions that comprise Sifre to Numbers yield no propositional program. But the recurrent proofs of discrete propositions that time and again bear one and the same implication do accumulate and when we see what is implicit in the various explicit exercises, we find a clear-cut and rather rich message indeed.

The document as a whole through its fixed and recurrent formal preferences or literary structures makes two complementary points. [1] Reason unaided by Scripture produces uncertain propositions. [2] Reason operating within the limits of Scripture produces truth. These two principles are never articulated but left implicit in the systematic reading of most of the book of Numbers, verse by verse. The exegetical forms stand for a single proposition: the human mind joins God's mind when humanity receives and sets forth the Torah. The Torah opens the road into the mind of God, and our minds can lead us on that road, because our mind and God's mind are comparable. We share a common rationality. Only when we examine the rhetorical plan and then in search of the topical program reconsider the forms of the document does this propositional program emerge.

As with Sifra, therefore, Sifre to Numbers follows no topical program distinct from that of Scripture, which is systematically clarified, as we shall see in a sample of the document below. An interest in the relations to Scripture of the Mishnah and Tosefta, a concern with the dialectics characteristic of Sifra—these occur episodically, but scarcely define the document. Its topical program and order derive from Scripture. As with Sifra, here, too, the sole point of coherence for the discrete sentences or paragraphs derives from the base-verse of Scripture that is subject to commentary. At the same time, if we examine the incremental message, the cumulative effect of the formal traits of speech and thought revealed in the uniform rhetoric and syntax of the document, we may discern a propositional program that is implicit in the rhetoric and logic of the compilation. What is required here is the articulation of the general consequences of numerous specific exegetical exercises.

If our authorship met the sets of writers whose consensus stands behind Sifra and Sifre to Deuteronomy, the several groups would find it difficult to distinguish themselves, one from the next. For one principal

point of emphasis we discern in our document takes an equally central role in the propositional, topical program of the other two compilations, Sifra and Sifre to Deuteronomy. It is the insistence on the principle that logic alone cannot suffice, and that all law must in the end derive from the written part of the Torah. The single sustained proposition of the several writings is that truth derives from Scripture, not from reason unaided by revelation. But a further proposition will attract our attention. By the very labor of explaining the meaning of verses of Scripture, the Rabbinic exegetes laid claim to participate in the work of revelation. And by distinguishing their contribution from the received text of the Torah, they announced their presence within the process of revelation. In these two ways the exegetes who made up Sifra and the two Sifre s announced not one but two fundamental propositions. The first is that God's revelation in the written Torah takes priority. The second is that man's reason in the exegesis of the written Torah enjoys full and legitimate place in the unfolding of the lessons of Sinai. No one can doubt that our authorship concurs on both principles.

The rhetorical form of both documents underlines the topical program contained in the first of the two propositions. For if I want to underline over and over again the priority of not proposition, hence reason, but process, hence the exegesis of Scripture, my best choice is an obvious one. Begin at all points with a verse of Scripture and demonstrate that only by starting with the word-choices and propositions of that verse of Scripture, all further progress of interpretation commences. But the second proposition, that man (then; now: men and women) has a place in the process of revealing the Torah of Sinai, comes to expression in the careful separation of the cited verse of the written Torah from the contribution of the contemporary exegete. In that formal preference too, the authorship made a major point and established—if implicitly—a central syllogism: God's will follows the rules of reason. Man can investigate the consequences of reason as expressed in God's will. Therefore man can join in the labor of exploring God's will in the Torah.

Consequently, the authorships of all three Midrash-compilations make their powerful case by their rhetorical program, which relies first and foremost on the citation and gloss of a verse of Scripture, as much as by their proposition and syllogism: only by Scripture does truth gain certainty. The appeal to Scripture, however, comes once the proposition is established, and that appeal then dictates the rhetoric and topic alike. Only when we know what question we bring to Scripture may we devise appropriate formal and programmatic policies for our Midrash-exegesis and Midrash-compilation alike. A second formal preference in all three documents, in addition to the exegetical form, makes the same point. The other form involves citation of a passage of the Mishnah followed by an extensive discourse on how the verse of Scripture that pertains to the topic of that Mishnah-passage must contribute its facts, revealed at Sinai, if we wish to know the truth. Reason alone, which is systematically tested through a sequence of propositions shown to fail, will not serve.

The rhetorical plan of Sifra and Sifre to Numbers and Sifre to Deuteronomy shows that the exegetes, while working verse by verse, in fact have brought a considerable program to the reading of the books of Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, respectively. The authorships of Sifra and the two Sifre s share that program, when they cite a verse of Scripture and then a passage of the Mishnah. The proposition then in all three writings concerns the interplay of the Oral Torah, represented by the Mishnah, with the written Torah, represented by the book of Leviticus or Numbers or Deuteronomy. That question demanded, in their view, not an answer comprising mere generalities. They wished to show their results through details, masses of details, and, like the rigorous philosophers that they were, they furthermore argued essentially through an inductive procedure, amassing evidence that in its accumulation made the point at hand.

The syllogism about the priority of the revelation of the Written Torah in the search

for truth is nowhere expressed in so many words, because the philosopher-exegetes of the Rabbinic world preferred to address an implicit syllogism and to pursue or to test that syllogism solely in a sequence of experiments on a small scale. The three authorships therefore find in the Mishnah and Tosefta a sizable laboratory for the testing of propositions. We have therefore to ask, "At what points do Sifra's and the two Sifres' authorships and those of the Mishnah and Tosefta share a common agenda of interests, and at what points does one compilation introduce problems, themes, or questions unknown to the other?"

The answers to these questions for the three Midrash-compilations are various. The one for Sifra will show that Sifra and Mishnah and Tosefta form two large concentric circles, sharing a considerable area in common. Sifra, however, exhibits interests peculiar to itself. On the criterion of common themes and interests, Mishnah and Tosefta and Sifra exhibit a remarkable unity. The authorships of the two Sifres in diverse measure join in that united front on a basic issue. The authorship of Sifre to Numbers, for its part, took up a pentateuchal book that in no way focuses upon the topics paramount, also, in the Mishnah and the Tosefta, in the way in which the book of Leviticus covers subjects that take a prominent position in the later law-codes. Consequently, we cannot find in Sifre to Numbers a counterpart to the stress on the matters we have located in Sifra. Still, the established polemic about the priority of Scripture over unaided reason does take its place. Accordingly, we can show that Sifra and the two Sifres join together in a single species of the genus, Midrash-compilation.

Let us now characterize the formal traits of Sifre to Numbers as a commentary, since, as noted at the outset, it is here that we identify the implicit propositional program of the document's compilers and the writers of the bulk of its compositions. These we have reduced to two classifications, based on the point of origin of the verses that are catalogued or subjected to exegesis: exegesis of a verse in the book of Numbers in terms of the theme or problems of that verse, hence, intrinsic exegesis; exegesis of a verse in Numbers in terms of a theme or polemic not particular to that verse, hence, extrinsic exegesis.

The Forms of Extrinsic Exegesis

The implicit message of the external category proves simple to define, since the several extrinsic classifications turn out to form a cogent polemic. Let me state the recurrent polemic of external exegesis.

The Syllogistic Composition

Scripture supplies hard facts, which, properly classified, generate syllogisms. By collecting and classifying facts of Scripture, therefore, we may produce firm laws of history, society, and Israel's everyday life. The diverse compositions in which verses from various books of the Scriptures are compiled in a list of evidence for a given proposition—whatever the character or purpose of that proposition—make that one point. And given their power and cogency, they make the point stick.

The Fallibility of Reason Unguided by Scriptural Exegesis

Scripture alone supplies reliable basis for speculation. Laws cannot be generated by reason or logic unguided by Scripture. Efforts at classification and contrastive-analogical exegesis, in which Scripture does not supply the solution to all problems, prove few and far between. This polemic forms the obverse of the point above. So when extrinsic issues intervene in the exegetical process, they coalesce to make a single point. Let me state that point with appropriate emphasis on the recurrent and implicit message of the forms of external exegesis: Scripture stands paramount; logic, reason, analytical processes of classification and differentiation, secondary. Reason not built on scriptural foundations yields uncertain results. The Mishnah itself demands scriptural bases.

The Forms of Intrinsic Exegesis

What about the polemic present in the intrinsic exegetical exercises? This clearly does not allow for ready characterization. As we saw, at least three intrinsic exegetical exercises focus on the use of logic, specifically, the logic of classification, comparison and contrast of species of a genus, in the explanation of the meaning of verses of the book of Numbers. The internal dialectical mode, moving from point to point as logic dictates, underlines the main point already stated: logic produces possibilities, Scripture chooses among them. Again, the question, why is this passage stated? commonly produces an answer generated by further verses of Scripture, e.g., this matter is stated here to clarify what otherwise would be confusion left in the wake of other verses. So Scripture produces problems of confusion and duplication, and Scripture—and not logic, not differentiation, not classification—solves those problems.

To state matters simply: Scripture is complete, harmonious, perfect. Logic not only does not generate truth beyond the limits of Scripture but also plays no important role in the harmonization of difficulties yielded by what appear to be duplications or disharmonies. These forms of internal exegesis then make the same point that the extrinsic ones do.

In so stating, of course, we cover all but the single most profuse category of exegesis, which we have treated as simple and undifferentiated: [1] verse of Scripture or a clause, followed by [2] a brief statement of the meaning at hand. Here I see no unifying polemic in favor of, or against, a given proposition. The most common form also proves the least pointed: X bears this meaning, Y bears that meaning, or, as we have seen, citation of verse X, followed by [what this means is]. . . . Whether simple or elaborate, the upshot is the same. What can be at issue when no polemic expressed in the formal traits of syntax and logic finds its way to the surface? What do I do when I merely clarify a phrase? Or, to frame the question more logically: what premises must validate my *intervention*, that is, my willingness to undertake to explain the meaning of a verse of Scripture? These justify the labor of intrinsic exegesis as we have seen its results here:

> [1] My independent judgment bears weight and produces meaning. I—that is, my mind—therefore may join in the process.
> [2] God's revelation to Moses at Sinai requires my intervention. I have the role, and the right, to say what that revelation means.
> [3] What validates my entry into the process of revelation is the correspondence between the logic of my mind and the logic of the document.

Only if I think in accord with the logic of the revealed Torah can my thought-processes join issue in clarifying what is at hand: the unfolding of God's will in the Torah. To state matters more accessibly: if the Torah does not make statements in accord with a syntax and a grammar that I know, I cannot so understand the Torah as to explain its meaning. But if I can join in the discourse of the Torah, it is because I speak the same language of thought: syntax and grammar at the deepest levels of my intellect.

> [4] Then to state matters affirmatively and finally: Since a shared logic of syntax and grammar joins my mind to the mind of God as revealed in the Torah, I can say what a sentence of the Torah means. So I too can amplify, clarify, expand, revise, rework: that is to say, create a commentary. So the work of commenting upon the written Torah bears profound consequence for the revelation of the Torah, the sage becoming partner with God in the giving of the Torah. In that conclusion, we find ourselves repeating the main point that Sifra yields in the description of Rabbinic literature as a whole.

What we see in Sifre's reading of Num. 7:1ff. is what we should by now expect: a systematic and close reading, verse by verse, with slight attention to issues of coherence and large-scale meaning: exegesis pure and simple.

> Sifre to Numbers 44
> XLIV:I.1.
> A. "On the day when Moses had finished setting up the tabernacle [and had anointed and consecrated it with all its furnishings and had anointed and consecrated the altar with all its utensils, the leaders of Israel, heads of their

fathers' houses, the leaders of the tribes, who were over those who were numbered, offered and brought their offerings before the Lord, six covered wagons and twelve oxen, a wagon for every two of the leaders, and for each one an ox, they offered them before the tabernacle. Then the Lord said to Moses, 'Accept these from them, that they may be used in doing the service of the tent of meeting, and give them to the Levites, to each man according to his service.' So Moses took the wagons and the oxen and gave them to the Levites]" (Num. 7:1–6):

B. Scripture indicates that for each of the seven days of consecrating the tabernacle, Moses would set up the tabernacle, and every morning he would anoint it and dismantle it. But on that day he set it up and anointed it, but he did not dismantle it. [On the prior days he set up the tabernacle and dismantled it. On the eighth day, he set it up but did not dismantle it.]
C. R. Yose b. R. Judah: "Also on the eighth day he set it up and dismantled it, for it is said, 'And in the first month in the second year on the first day of the month the tabernacle was erected' (Exod. 30:17). On the basis of that verse we learn that on the twenty-third day of Adar, Aaron and his sons, the tabernacle and the utensils were anointed."

XLV:I.2.

A. On the first day of the month the tabernacle was set up, on the second the red cow was burned [for the purification rite required at Num. 19], on the third day water was sprinkled from it in lieu of the second act of sprinkling, the Levites were shaved.
B. On that same day the Presence of God rested in the tabernacle, as it is said, "Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle, and Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting, because the cloud abode upon it" (Exod. 40:34).
C. On that same day the heads offered their offerings, as it is said, "He who offered his offering the first day . . ." (Num. 7:12). Scripture uses the word "first" only in a setting when "first" introduces all of the days of the year.
D. On that day fire came down from heaven and consumed the offerings, as it is said, "And fire came forth from before the Lord and consumed the burnt offering and the fat upon the altar" (Lev. 9:24).
E. On that day the sons of Aaron offered strange fire, as it is said, "Now Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer and put fire in it . . . and offered unholy fire before the Lord, such as he had not commanded them" (Lev. 10:1).
F. "And they died before the Lord . . ." (Lev. 10:2): they died before the Lord, but they fell outside [of the tabernacle, not imparting corpse uncleanness to it].
G. How so? They were on their way out.
H. R. Yose says, "An angel sustained them, as they died, until they got out, and they fell in the courtyard, as it is said, 'And Moses called Mishael and Elzaphan, the sons of Uzziel the uncle of Aaron, and said to them, 'Draw near, carry your brethren from before the sanctuary out of the camp'" (Lev. 10:4). What is stated is not, 'From before the Lord," but, 'from before the sanctuary.'"
I. R. Ishmael says, "The context indicates the true state of affairs, as it is said, 'And they died before the Lord,' meaning, they died inside and fell inside. How did they get out? People dragged them with iron ropes."

The expansion and amplification of the base verse runs through No. 1. From that point, No. 2, we deal with the other events of that same day, surveying the several distinct narratives which deal with the same thing, Exod. 40, Lev. 9–10, and so on. This produces the effect of unifying the diverse scriptural accounts into one tale, an important and powerful exegetical result. One of the persistent contributions of our exegetes is to collect and harmonize a diversity of verses taken to refer to the same day, event, or rule.

XLIV:II.1.

A. ". . . and had anointed and consecrated it with all its furnishings and had anointed and consecrated the altar with all its utensils:"
B. Might I infer that as each utensil was anointed, it was sanctified?
C. Scripture says, ". . . and had anointed and consecrated it with all its furnishings and had anointed and consecrated the altar with all its utensils," meaning that not one of them was sanctified until all of them had been anointed. [The process proceeded by stages.]

XLIV:II.2.

A. ". . . and had anointed and consecrated it with all its furnishings and had anointed and consecrated the altar with all its utensils:"
B. The anointing was done both inside and outside [of the utensil].

C. R. Josiah says, "Utensils meant to hold liquids were anointed inside and outside, but utensils meant to hold dry stuffs were anointed on the inside but not anointed on the outside."
D. R. Jonathan says, "Utensils meant to hold liquids were anointed inside and not outside, but utensils meant to hold dry stuffs not anointed.
E. "You may know that they were not consecrated, for it is said, 'You shall bring from your dwellings two loaves of bread to be waved, made of two-tenths of an ephah' (Lev. 23:17). Then when do they belong to the Lord? Only after they are baked." [The bread was baked in utensils at home, so the utensils were not consecrated.]

XLIV:II.3.
A. Rabbi says, "Why is it said, '. . . and had anointed and consecrated it'? And is it not already stated, '. . . and had anointed and consecrated it'?
B. "This indicates that with the anointing of these utensils all future utensils were sanctified [so that the sanctification of the tabernacle enjoyed permanence and a future tabernacle or Temple did not require a rite of sanctification once again]."

No. 1 clarifies the rite of sanctification, aiming at the notion that the act of consecration covered everything at once, leading to the future conclusion, at the end, that that act also covered utensils later on to be used in the cult. No. 3 goes over that same ground. No. 2 deals with its own issue, pursuing the exegesis of the verse at hand. Its interest in the consecration of the utensils is entirely congruent with No. 3, because it wants to know the status of utensils outside of the cult, and, while they serve the purpose of the cult as specified, still, they are not deemed to have been consecrated.

Sifre to Numbers 45

XLV:I.1.
A. "[On the day when Moses had finished setting up the tabernacle and had anointed and consecrated it with all its furnishings and had anointed and consecrated the altar with all its utensils] the leaders of Israel [heads of their fathers' houses, the leaders of the tribes, who were over those who were numbered] offered [and brought their offerings before the Lord, six covered wagons and twelve oxen, a wagon for every two of the leaders, and for each one an ox, they offered them before the tabernacle. Then the Lord said to Moses, 'Accept these from them, that they may be used in doing the service of the tent of meeting, and give them to the Levites, to each man according to his service.' So Moses took the wagons and the oxen and gave them to the Levites]" (Num. 7:1–6):
B. May I infer that they had been ordinary people who were elevated.
C. Scripture says, "heads of their fathers' houses."
D. And they were not merely, "heads of their fathers' houses," but also "the leaders of the tribes, who were over those who were numbered.'"
E. They were leaders, sons of leaders.

XLV:I.2.
A. ". . . the leaders of the tribes, who were over those who were numbered:"
B. They were the same ones who had been appointed over them in Egypt, as it is said, "And the leaders of the children of Israel smote . . ." (Exod. 5:14).

The interest is in showing the distinguished origins of the Israelite leadership.

XLV:II.1.
A. ". . . six covered wagons [and twelve oxen, a wagon for every two of the leaders, and for each one an ox, they offered them before the tabernacle]:"
B. The word "covered" means only "decorated," for they lacked for nothing.
C. Rabbi says, "The word 'covered' means only 'canopied,' and even though there is no firm proof for that proposition, there is at least some indication of it: 'And they shall bring all your brethren from all the nations as an offering to the Lord, upon horses and in chariots and in litters and upon mules and upon dromedaries to my holy mountain, Jerusalem, says the Lord' (Is. 66:20)."

XLV:II.2.
A. ". . . six covered wagons and twelve oxen, a wagon for every two of the leaders, and for each one an ox, they offered them before the tabernacle.
B. May I infer that there was a wagon for each one?
C. Scripture says, ". . . a wagon for every two of the leaders."
D. May I infer there was an ox for every two of the leaders?
E. Scripture says, ". . . and for each one an ox."

XLV:II.3.
A. They came and took up positions before the tabernacle, but Moses did not accept anything from them, until it was stated to him by the mouth of the Holy One, "Accept these from them, that they may be used in doing the service of the tent of meeting."

B. Lo, mortals thus brought their judgment into accord with the judgment on high.

XLV:II.4.

A. R. Nathan says, "And why in the present matter did the princes bring voluntary gifts first [rather than waiting for the community to do so], while in the work of the making of the tabernacle they in fact did not volunteer to begin with [but let the community give and only afterward they made their contribution]?

B. "Well, this is how the leaders had earlier reasoned matters out: 'Let the community contribute what they will, and what is still needed after they have given we shall make up.'

C. "When the princes realized that the community had provided all that was needed, as it is said, 'And the work was sufficient' (Exod. 34:4), the princes said, 'What is left for us to do?'

D. "So the princes brought the precious stones for the ephod.

E. "That is why, in the present case, the princes brought their voluntary offering first [so as not to be left out]."

No. 1 provides the explanation of a word, and No. 2 proceeds to a phrase. No. 3 restates what the text says and explains the implications of the matter, and No. 4 draws into relationship two distinct accounts of gifts to the sanctuary, explaining in a striking way the difference in the detail of the two pictures.

Sifre to Numbers 46

XLVI:I.1.

A. "So Moses took the wagons and the oxen and gave them to the Levites" (Num. 7:1–6):

B. Lo, Moses took them and divided them up on his own initiative.

XLVI:I.2.

A. "The two wagons and the four oxen he gave to the sons of Gershom, and the four wagons and the eight oxen he gave to the sons of Merari,"

B. Because Eleazar had sixteen sons, and Ithamar, eight.

C. As it is said, "The male heads of families proved to be more numerous in the line of Eleazar than in that of Ithamar, so that sixteen heads of families were grouped under the line of Eleazar and eight under that of Ithamar. He organized them by drawing lots among them, for there were sacred officers and offices of God in the line of Eleazar and in that of Ithamar" (1 Chr. 24:4–6).

No. 1 draws its own conclusions from the cited verse, and No. 2 proceeds to relate the present division to the materials available elsewhere, a common exegetical interest.

XLVI:II.1.

A. "He gave none to the Kohathites, because the service laid upon them was that of the holy things: these they had to carry themselves on their shoulders" (Num. 7:9):

B. R. Nathan, "On the basis of what is said here we see what David missed, for the Levites did not bear the ark, but they bore the wagon, as it is said, 'They mounted the ark of God on a new cart and conveyed it from the house of Abinadab on the hill' (1 Sam. 6:3).

C. "'The Lord was angry with Uzzah and struck him down there for his rash act, so he died there beside the ark of God' (2 Sam. 6:7).

D. "'David was vexed because the Lord's anger had broken out upon Uzzah, and he called the place Perez-uzzah, the name it still bears' (2 Sam 6:8).

E. "Ahitophel said to David, 'Should you not have learned the lesson of Moses, your master, for the Levites bore the ark only on their shoulders, as it says, "He gave none to the Kohathites, because the service laid upon them was that of the holy things: these they had to carry themselves on their shoulders."'

F. "Lo, David then sent and had it carried by shoulder, as it is said, 'And David summoned Zadok and Abiathar the priests, together with the Levites, Uriel, Asaiah, Joel, Shemaiah, Eliel, and Amminadab, and said to them, You who are heads of families of the Levites, hallow yourselves, you and your kinsmen, and bring up the ark of the Lord, the God of Israel, to the place which I have prepared for it . . . So the priests and the Levites hallowed themselves to bring up the ark of the Lord, the God of Israel, and the Levites carried the ark of God, bearing it on their shoulders with poles, as Moses had prescribed at the command of the Lord' (1 Chr. 15:11–15)."

XLVI:II.2.

A. "This was their order of duty for the discharge of their service when they entered the house of the Lord, according to the rule prescribed for them by their ancestor Aaron, who had received his instructions from the Lord, the God of Israel" (1 Chr. 24:19):

B. Where did he give a commandment? He gave nothing at all to the sons of Kohath. So lo, the sons of the Levites in no way innovated, but everything was done on the instructions of Moses, and Moses did everything at the instructions of the Almighty.

No. 1 is important in underlining David's error in not following the precedent established here by Moses and the Levites, carrying the ark not on the wagon but on their shoulders. David then corrected himself, following the proper precedent. No. 2 then underlines the matter that the precedent of the base verse guided the Levites later on. What we see then is a harmonization of diverse materials on the same important theme.

Sifre to Numbers 47
XLVII:I.1.

A. "And the leaders presented offerings for the dedication of the altar [on the day it was anointed; and the leaders offered their offering before the altar. And the Lord said to Moses, 'They shall offer their offerings, one leader each day, for the dedication of the altar.' He who offered his offering the first day was Nahshon the son of Amminadab of the tribe of Judah; and his offering was one silver plate whose weight was a hundred and thirty shekels, one silver basin of seventy shekels according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil for a cereal offering; one golden dish of ten shekels, full of incense; one young bull, one ram, one male lamb a year old, for a burnt offering; one male goat for a sin offering; and for the sacrifice of peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs a year old. This was the offering of Nahshon the son of Amminadab]" (Num. 7:10–17):
B. The Scripture thus indicates that just as the princes made voluntary gifts for the work of building the tabernacle, so they did for the dedication of the tabernacle.

XLVII:I.2.

A. "And the leaders offered offerings for the dedication of the altar . . . and the leaders offered their offering before the altar:"
B. They came and stood before the altar, but Moses did not accept the offerings from them, until he was so instructed by the word of the Holy One: "Let them make their offerings for the dedication of the altar."
C. Moses still did not know the proper manner in which they were to make their offerings, whether by the order dictated for the journeys, whether by the order dictated by the generations in which the tribal founders had been born, until he was instructed by the explicit statement of the Holy One, blessed be he, "Let them offer in accord with the order governing their journeys," as it is said, "And it came to pass." For the words "and it came to pass" indicate solely what was said to Moses on the authority of the Holy One, so they offered in accord with the order governing their journeys.
D. But Moses still did not know how the princes were to make their offerings, specifically, whether it was to be done all at once, or each one on his own day, until he was so instructed that each was to offer on his own day, as it is said, "They shall offer their offerings, one leader each day, for the dedication of the altar."
E. The princes make voluntary offerings, but ordinary people do not do so. Why then does Scripture say, "'They shall offer their offerings, one leader each day, for the dedication of the altar" [specifying that the princes did it, when we know that only they could do it]
F. It was because Nahshon was a king, and he made the offering first. So people should not say, "Lo, because I made the offering first, I shall make an offering with everyone else, day by day. Therefore it is said, "'They shall offer their offerings, one leader each day, for the dedication of the altar."

We begin with the simple clarification of the donation of the princes: not only for building the tabernacle but also for dedicating the altar. Then, No. 2, we underline that each detail of the process of dedication was dictated by divine instructions. This would underline the polemic that the original work of sanctification imparted to the cult an indelible character of holiness. It is difficult to find a single point that does not begin in the amplification of the statements of Scripture.

Jacob Neusner

O

Orthodox Judaism

Many people reasonably identify all "traditional" or "observant" Judaism with Orthodoxy, and they furthermore take for granted that all traditional Judaisms are pretty much the same. But a wide variety of Judaisms affirm the Torah, oral and written, and abide by its laws, as interpreted by their particular masters, who differ from one another on many important points. Thus, rather than simply signifying "observant" Judaism in general, the designation "Orthodox" refers to a very particular Judaic religious system, one that affirms the divine revelation and eternal authority of the Torah, oral and written, but that favors the integration of the Jews ("holy Israel") into the national life of the countries of their birth. Other "observant" Judaisms affirm the Torah but favor the segregation of the holy Israel from other people in the countries where they live, including the state of Israel. Indicators such as clothing, language, and, above all, education differentiate integrationist from segregationist Judaisms. Orthodoxy identifies with the former, integrationist category, and a wide variety of other Judaisms fall into the latter, segregationist category.

When Jews who kept the law of the Torah, for example as it dictated food choices and use of leisure time (to speak of the Sabbath and festivals in secular terms), sent their children to secular schools, in addition to or instead of solely Jewish ones, or when, in Jewish schools, they included in the curriculum subjects outside of the sciences of the Torah, they crossed the boundary between the received and the new Judaism. For in the nineteenth century the notion that science or German or Latin or philosophy deserved serious study, while not alien to important exemplars of the received system of the dual Torah, struck as wrong those for whom the received system remained self-evidently right. Those Jews did not send their children to gentile schools, and in Jewish schools did not include in the curriculum other than Torah-study.

Integrationist, Orthodox Judaism come into being in Germany in the middle of the nineteenth century among Jews who rejected Reform and made a self-conscious decision to remain within the way of life and world view that they had known and cherished all their lives. They framed the issues in terms of change and history. The Reformers held that Judaism could change, and that Judaism was a product of history. The Orthodox opponents denied that Judaism could change and insisted that Judaism derived from God's will at Sinai and was eternal and supernatural, not historical and man-made. In these two convictions, of course, the Orthodox recapitulated the convictions of the received system. But in their appeal to the given, the traditional, they found more persuasive some components of that system than they did others, and in the picking and choosing, in the articulation of the view that Judaism formed a religion to be seen as distinct and autonomous of politics, society, "the rest of life," they entered that same world of self-conscious believing that the Reformers also explored.

Orthodox Judaism is that Judaic system that mediates between the received Judaism of the dual Torah and the requirements of living a life integrated in modern circumstances. It dealt with the same urgent questions as did Reform Judaism, questions raised

by political emancipation, but it gave different answers to them. Orthodoxy maintains the world-view of the received dual Torah, constantly citing its sayings and adhering with only trivial variations to the bulk of its norms for the everyday life. At the same time Orthodoxy holds that Jews who adhere to the dual Torah may wear clothing that non-Jews wear and do not have to wear distinctively Jewish clothing; live within a common economy and not practice distinctively Jewish professions (however, in a given setting, these professions may be defined), and, in diverse ways, take up a life not readily distinguished in important characteristics from the life lived by people in general.

So for Orthodoxy a portion of Israel's life may prove secular, in that the Torah does not dictate and so sanctify all details under all circumstances. Since the Judaism of the dual Torah presupposed not only the supernatural entity, Israel, but also a way of life that in important ways distinguished that supernatural entity from the social world at large, the power of Orthodoxy to find an accommodation for Jews who valued the received way of life and world view and also planned to make their lives in an essentially integrated social world proves formidable. The difference between Orthodoxy and the system of the dual Torah therefore comes to expression in social policy: integration, however circumscribed, versus the total separation of the holy people.

Many see Orthodox Judaism as the same as "the tradition," what is natural and normal, holding that Orthodoxy now stands for how things always were, for all time. But the term Orthodoxy" takes on meaning only in the contrast to Reform, so in a simple sense, Orthodoxy owes its life to Reform Judaism. The term first surfaced in 1795,[1] and over all covers all Jews who believe that God revealed the dual Torah at Sinai and that Jews must carry out the requirements of Jewish law contained in the Torah as interpreted by the sages through time. Obviously, so long as that position struck as self-evident the generality of Jewry at large, Orthodoxy as a distinct and organized Judaism did not exist. It did not have to. What is interesting is the point at which two events took place: first, the recognition of the received system, "the tradition" as Orthodoxy, second, the specification of the received system as religion. The two of course go together. So long as the Judaism of the dual Torah enjoys recognition as a set of self-evident truths, those truths add up not to something so distinct as "religion" but to a general statement of how things are: all of life explained and harmonized in one whole account.

The view that the received system was "traditional" came first. That identification of truth as tradition came about when the received system met the challenge of competing Judaisms. Then, in behalf of the received way of life and world view addressed to supernatural Israel, people said that the Judaism of the dual Torah was established of old, the right, the only way of seeing and doing things, how things have been and should be naturally and normally: "Tradition." But that is a category that contains within itself an alternative, namely, change, as in "tradition and change."

Only when the system lost its power of self-evidence did it enter, among other apologetic categories, the classification, "the Tradition." And that came about when Orthodoxy met head on the challenge of change called Reform. We understand why the category of tradition, the received way of doing things, became critical to the framers of Orthodoxy when we examine the counter claim. That is to say, just as the Reformers justified change, the Orthodox theologians denied that change was ever possible, so Walter Wurzburger: "Orthodoxy looks upon attempts to adjust Judaism to the 'spirit of the time' as utterly incompatible with the entire thrust of normative Judaism which holds that the revealed will of God rather than the values of any given age are the ultimate standard."[2]

The position outlined by the new, Orthodox theologians followed the agenda laid forth by the Reformers. If the Reform made minor changes in liturgy and its conduct, the Orthodox rejected even those that, under other circumstances, might have found acceptance. Saying prayers in the vernacular, for example, provoked strong opposition. But everyone knew that some of the

prayers, said in Aramaic, in fact were in the vernacular of the earlier age. The Orthodox thought that these changes, not reforms at all, represented only the first step of a process leading Jews out of the Judaic world altogether, so, as Wurzburger says, "The slightest tampering with tradition was condemned."

If we ask where did the received system of the dual Torah prevail, and where, by contrast, did Orthodoxy come to full expression, we may follow the spreading out of railway lines, the growth of new industry, the shifts in political status accorded to, among other citizens, Jews, changes in the educational system, in all, the entire process of political change, economic and social, demographic and cultural shifts of a radical and fundamental nature. Where the changes came early in the nineteenth century, Reform Judaism met them in its way, and Orthodoxy in its way. Where change came later in the century, as in the case of Russian Poland, the eastern provinces of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and Russia itself, there, in villages contentedly following the old ways, the received system endured. Again, in an age of mass migration from Eastern Europe to America and other western democracies, those who experienced the upheaval of leaving home and country met the challenge of change either by accepting new ways of seeing things or articulately and in full self-awareness reaffirming the familiar ones, once more, Reform or Orthodoxy. We may, therefore, characterize the received system as a way of life and world view wedded to an ancient people's homelands, the villages and small towns of central and eastern Europe, and Orthodoxy as the heir of that received system as it came to expression in the towns and cities of central and Western Europe and America. That rule of thumb, with certain exceptions, allows us to distinguish between the piety of a milieu and the theological conviction of a self-conscious community. Or we may accept the familiar distinction between tradition and articulate Orthodoxy, a distinction with its own freight of apologetics to be sure.

When, therefore, we explain by reference to political and economic change the beginnings of Reform Judaism, we also understand the point of origin of Orthodoxy as distinct and organized. Clearly, the beginnings of Orthodoxy took place in the areas where Reform made its way, hence in Germany and in Hungary. In Germany, where Reform attracted the majority of not a few Jewish communities, the Orthodox faced a challenge indeed. Critical to their conviction was the notion that "Israel," all of the Jews, bore responsibility to carry out the law of the Torah. But the community's institutions in the hands of the Reform did not obey the law of the Torah as the Orthodox understood it. So, in the end, Orthodoxy took that step that marked it as a self-conscious Judaism. Orthodoxy separated from the established community altogether. The Orthodox set up their own organization and seceded from the community at large. The next step prohibited Orthodox Jews from participating in non-Orthodox organizations altogether. Isaac Breuer, a leading theologian of Orthodoxy, would ultimately take the position that "refusal to espouse the cause of separation was interpreted as being equivalent to the rejection of the absolute sovereignty of God."[3]

The matter of accommodating to the world at large, of course, did not allow for so easy an answer as mere separation. The specific issue—integration or segregation—concerned preparation for life in the large politics and economic life of the country, and that meant secular education, involving not only language and science, but history and literature, matters of values. Orthodoxy proved diverse, with two wings to be distinguished, one rejecting secular learning as well as all dealing with non-Orthodox Jews, the other cooperating with non-Orthodox and secular Jews and accepting the value of secular education. That position in no way affected loyalty to the law of Judaism, e.g., belief in God's revelation of the one whole Torah at Sinai. The point at which the received system and Orthodox split requires specification. In concrete terms we know the one from the other by the evaluation of secular education. Proponents of the received system never accommodated themselves to secular education, while the Orthodox in Germany and Hungary persistently

affirmed it. That represents a remarkable shift, since central to the received system of the dual Torah is study of Torah—Torah, not philosophy.

Explaining where we find the one and the other, Katzburg works with the distinction we have already made, between an unbroken system and one that has undergone a serious caesura with the familiar condition of the past. He states:

> In Eastern Europe until World War I, Orthodoxy preserved without a break its traditional ways of life and the time-honored educational framework. In general, the mainstream of Jewish life was identified with Orthodoxy, while Haskalah [Jewish Enlightenment, which applied to the Judaic setting the skeptical attitudes of the French Enlightenment] and secularization were regarded as deviations. Hence there was no ground wherein a Western type of Orthodoxy could take root. . . . European Orthodoxy in the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries was significantly influenced by the move from small settlements to urban centers . . . as well as by emigration. Within the small German communities there was a kind of popular Orthodoxy, deeply attached to tradition and to local customs, and when it moved to the large cities this element brought with it a vitality and rootedness to Jewish tradition. . . .[4]

Katzburg's observations provide important guidance. He authoritatively defines the difference between Orthodoxy and "tradition." So he tells us how to distinguish the received system accepted as self-evident, and an essentially selective, therefore by definition new system, called Orthodoxy. In particular he guides us in telling the one from the other and where to expect to find, in particular, the articulated, therefore, self-conscious affirmation of "tradition" that characterizes Orthodoxy but does not occur in the world of the dual Torah as it glided in its eternal orbit of the seasons and of unchanging time.

Old and New in Orthodoxy

Urban Orthodox Jews experienced change, daily encountered Jews unlike themselves, no longer lived in that stable Judaic society in which the received Torah formed the given of life. Pretense that Jews faced no choices scarcely represented a possibility. Nor did the generality of the Jews propose, in the West, to preserve a separate language or to renounce political rights. So Orthodoxy made its peace with change, no less than did Reform. The educational program that led Jews out of the received culture of the dual Torah, the use of the vernacular, the acceptance of political rights, the renunciation of Jewish garments, education for women, abolition of the power of the community to coerce the individual—these and many other originally Reform positions characterized the Orthodoxy that emerged, another new Judaism, in the nineteenth century.

If we ask, how new was the Orthodox system? we find ambiguous answers. In conviction, in way of life, in world view, we may hardly call it new at all. For the bulk of its substantive positions found ample precedent in the received dual Torah. From its affirmation of God's revelation of a dual Torah to its acceptance of the detailed authority of the law and customs, from its strict observance of the law to its unwillingness to change a detail of public worship, Orthodoxy rightly pointed to its strong links with the chain of tradition. But Orthodoxy still constituted a sect within the Jewish group. Its definition of the "Israel" to whom it wished to speak and the definition characteristic of the dual Torah hardly coincide. The Judaism of the dual Torah addressed all Jews, and Orthodoxy recognized that it could not do so. Orthodoxy acquiesced in a situation that lay beyond the imagination of the framers of the Judaism of the dual Torah.

True, the Orthodox had no choice. Their seceding from the community and forming their own institutions ratified the simple fact that they could not work with the Reformers. But the upshot remains the same. That supernatural entity, Israel, gave up its place and a natural Israel, a this-worldly political fact, succeeded. Pained though Orthodoxy was by the fact, it nonetheless accommodated the new social reality—and affirmed it by reshaping the sense of Israel in the supernatural dimension. Their Judaism no less than the Judaism of the Reformers stood for something new, a birth not a renewal—

a political response to a new politics. True enough, for Orthodoxy the politics was that of the Jewish community, divided as it was among diverse visions of the political standing of Israel, the Jewish people. For the Reform, by contrast, the new politics derived from the establishment of the category of neutral citizenship in an encompassing nation-state. But the political shifts flowed from the same large-scale changes in Israel's consciousness and character, and, it follows, Orthodoxy as much as Reform represented a set of self-evident answers to political questions that none could evade.

To claim that the Orthodox went in search of proof-texts for a system formed and defined in advance, of course, misrepresents the reality—but not by much. For once the system of a self-conscious and deliberate Orthodoxy took shape, much picking and choosing, assigning of priorities to some things and not others—these would follow naturally. And the upshot of it all remains the same: a new system, a way of life much like the received one, but readily differentiated; a world view congruent to the received one, but with its own points of interest and emphasis; and, above all, a social referent, an "Israel" quite beyond the limits of the one posited by the dual Torah. Orthodoxy represents the most interesting challenge to the hypothesis announced at the outset.

In general, no Judaism recapitulates any other. Each begins on its own, defining the questions it wished to answer and laying forth the responses it finds self-evidently true, only then going back to the canon of received documents in search of proof-texts. Every Judaism therefore commences in the definition (to believers: the discovery) of its canon. Orthodoxy surely forms an enormous exception to such a proposed rule. For its canon recognized the same books, accorded the same status and authority as in the antecedent system. Yet that is only part of the story. Orthodoxy also produced books to which the received system of the dual Torah could afford no counterpart—and vice versa. Orthodoxy addressed questions not pertinent to the received system or to the world that it constructed. Its answers of course violated important givens of the received system. The single most significant trait of Orthodoxy, we shall now see, is its power to see the "Torah" as "Judaism," the category-shift that changed everything else (or, that ratified all other changes).

Judaism Enters the Category, "Religion"

The category "religion," with its counterpart, "secular," recognizes as distinct from "all of life" matters having to do with the church, the life of faith, the secular as against the sacred. Those distinctions were lost on the received system of the dual Torah, of course, which legislated for matters we should today regard as entirely secular or neutral, for example, the institutions of state (e.g., king, priest, army). We have already noted that in the received system as it took shape in Eastern and Central Europe, Jews wore garments regarded as distinctively Jewish, and some important traits of these garments indeed derived from the Torah. They pursued sciences that only Jews studied, for instance, the Talmud and its commentaries. In these and other ways, the Torah encompassed all of the life of Israel, the holy people. The recognition that Jews were like others, that the Torah fell into a category into which other and comparable matters fell—that recognition was long in coming.

For Christians it had become a commonplace in Germany and other Western countries to see "religion" as distinct from other components of the social and political system. While the Church in Russia identified with the Tsarist state, or with the national aspirations of the Polish people, for example, in Germany two churches, Catholic and Protestant, competed. The terrible wars of the Reformation in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which ruined Germany, had led to the uneasy compromise that the prince might choose the religion of his principality, and, from that self-aware choice, people understood that "the way of life and world view" in fact constituted a religion, and that one religion might be compared with some other. By the nineteenth century, moreover, the separation of church

and state ratified the important distinction between religion, where difference would be tolerated, and the secular, where citizens were pretty much the same.

That fact of political consciousness in the West reached the Judaic world only in the late eighteenth century for some intellectuals, and in the nineteenth century for large numbers of others. It registered, then, as a fundamental shift in the understanding and interpretation of "the Torah," now seen, among Orthodox as much as among Reform, as "Judaism," an *-ism* alongside other *-isms*. A mark of the creative power of the Jews who formed the Orthodox Judaic system derives from their capacity to shift the fundamental category in which they framed their system. The basic shift in category is what made Orthodoxy a Judaism on its own, not simply a restatement, essentially in established classifications, of the received system of the dual Torah.

If we ask how Orthodox Judaism, so profoundly rooted in the canonical writings and received convictions of the Judaism of the dual Torah, at the same time made provision for the issues of political and cultural change at hand, we recognize the importance of the shift in category contributed by Orthodoxy. For Orthodoxy, within the sector of the received system, made provision for the difference between sacred and secular, so within Judaic systems identified as a religion, Judaism, what the received system had called the Torah, encompassing and symmetrical with the whole of the life of Judaic society. Specifically, Orthodox Judaism took the view that one could observe the rules of the Judaic system of the ages and at the same time keep the laws of the state. More important, Orthodox Judaism took full account of the duties of citizenship, so far as being a good citizen imposed the expectation of conformity in certain aspects of everyday life. So a category, "religion," could contain the Torah, and another category, "the secular," could allow Jews a place in the accepted civic life of the country. The importance of the category-shift therefore lies in its power to accommodate the political change so important, also, to Reform Judaism. The Jews' differences from others would fit into categories in which difference was (in Jews' minds at any rate) acceptable, and would not violate those lines to which all citizens had to adhere.

To review the fundamental shift represented by the distinction between secular and religious, we recall our original observation that Jews no longer wished to wear distinctively Jewish clothing, for example, or to speak a Jewish language, or to pursue only Jewish learning under Jewish auspices. Yet the received system, giving expression to the rules of sanctification of the holy people, did entail wearing Jewish clothing, speaking a Jewish language, learning only, or mainly, Jewish sciences. So clothing, language, and education now fell into the category of the secular, while other equally important aspects of everyday life remained in the category of the sacred. Orthodox Judaism, as it came into existence in Germany and other Western countries, therefore found it possible by recognizing the category of the secular to accept the language, clothing, and learning of those countries. And these matters serve only to exemplify a larger acceptance of gentile ways, not all but enough to lessen the differences between the Holy People and the nations. Political change of a profound order, which made Jews call into question some aspects of the received system—if not most or all of them, as would be the case for Reform Judaism—presented to Jews who gave expression to Orthodox Judaism the issues at hand: how separate, how integrated? And the answers required picking and choosing, different things to be sure, just as much as, in principle, the Reform Jews picked and choose. Both Judaisms understood that somethings were sacred, others not, and that understanding marked these Judaisms off from the system of the dual Torah.

Once the category-shift had taken place, the difference was to be measured in degree, not kind. For Orthodox Jews maintained those distinctive beliefs of a political character in the future coming of the Messiah and the reconstitution of the Jewish nation in its own land that Reform Jews rejected. But, placing these convictions in the distant future, the Orthodox Jews nonetheless prepared for a protracted interim of life within

the nation at hand, like the Reform different in religion, not in nationality as represented by citizenship. What follows for our inquiry is that Orthodoxy, as much as Reform, signals remarkable changes in the Jews' political situation and—more important—aspiration. They did want to be different, but not so different as the received system would have made them.

Still, Orthodoxy in its nineteenth century formulation laid claim to carry forward, in continuous and unbroken relationship, "the tradition." That claim assuredly demands a serious hearing, for the things that Orthodoxy taught, the way of life it required, the Israel to whom it spoke, the doctrines it deemed revealed by God to Moses at Sinai—all of these conformed more or less exactly to the system of the received Judaism of the dual Torah as people then knew it. So any consideration of the issue of a linear and incremental history of Judaism has to take at face value the character, and not merely the claim, of Orthodoxy. But we do not have without reflection to concede that claim. Each Judaism, after all, demands study not in categories defined by its own claims of continuity, but in those defined by its own distinctive and characteristic choices. For a system takes shape and then makes choices—in that order. But the issue facing us in Orthodoxy is whether or not Orthodoxy can be said to make choices at all. For is it not what it says it is, "just Judaism"? Indeed so, but the dual Torah of the received tradition hardly generated the base-category, "Judaism." And "Judaism," Orthodox or otherwise, is not "Torah."

That is the point at which making self-conscious choices enters discourse. For the Orthodoxy of the nineteenth century—that is, the Judaism that named itself "Orthodox"—exhibited certain traits of mind that marked its framers as distinctive, that is, as separate from the received Judaism of the dual Torah as the founders of Reform Judaism. To state the matter simply: by adopting for themselves the category, religion, and by recognizing a distinction between religion and the secular, the holy and other categories of existence, the founders of Orthodoxy performed an act of choice and selectivity. And that defines them as self-conscious and shows that the received system for them was not self-evident. It was no longer definitive of the very facts of being as it had been and remained for those for whom it was self-evident.

The Torah found itself transformed into an object, a thing out there, a matter of choice, deliberation, affirmation. In that sense Orthodoxy recognized a break in the line of the received "tradition" and proposed to repair the break: a self-conscious, modern decision. The issues addressed by Orthodoxy, the questions its framers found ineluctable—these take second place. The primary consideration in our assessment of the claim of Orthodoxy to carry forward, in a straight line, the incremental history of a single Judaism, carries us to the fundamental categories within which Orthodoxy pursued its thought, but the Judaism of the dual Torah did not. The Judaism of the dual Torah had no word for Judaism; Orthodoxy did (and does).

So let us dwell on this matter of the category, Judaism, a species of the genus, religion. The fact is that those Jews for whom the received Judaism retained the standing of self-evident truth in no way recognized the distinctions implicit in the category, religion. Those distinctions separated one dimension of existence from others, specifically, the matter of faith and religious action from all other matters, such as politics, economic life, incidental aspects of every day life such as clothing, vocation and avocation, and the like. As I have stressed, the Judaism of the dual Torah, for its part, encompasses every dimension of human existence, both personal and public, both private and political. The Jews constitute a supernatural people; their politics form the public dimension of their holiness, and their personal lives match the most visible and blatant rules of public policy. The whole forms a single fabric, an indivisible and totally coherent entity, at once social and cultural, economic and political—and, above all, religious. The recognition, therefore, that we may distinguish the religious from the political, or concede as distinct any dimension of a person's life or of the life of the community of Judaism, forms powerful evidence that a fresh system has come into existence.

For nineteenth century Reform and Orthodox theologians alike, the category "Judaism" defined what people said when they wished all together and all at once to describe what the Jews believe, or the Jewish religion, or similar matters covering religious ideas viewed as a system and as a whole. It therefore constituted a philosophical category, an *-ism*, instructing thinkers to seek the system and order and structure of ideas: the doctrine of this, the doctrine of that, in Juda-*ism*. The nineteenth century Judaic religious thinkers invoked the category, Judaism, when they proposed to speak of the whole of Judaic religious existence. Available to the Judaism of the dual Torah are other categories, other words, to tell how to select and organize and order data: all together, all at once to speak of the whole.

To the Jews who abided within the received Judaism of the dual Torah, the discovery of Orthodoxy therefore represented an innovation, a shift from the self-evident truths of the Torah. For their word for Judaism was Torah, and when they spoke of the whole all at once, they used the word Torah—and they also spoke of different things from the things encompassed by Judaism. For the received Judaism of the dual Torah did not use the word the nineteenth century theologians used when speaking of the things of which they spoke when they said, Juda-*ism*. The received system not only used a different word, but in fact referred to different things. The two categories—Judaism and Torah—which are supposed to refer to the same data in the same social world, in fact encompass different data from those taken in categorically, by Judaism. So we contrast the two distinct categories, Judaism and Torah.

Judaism falls into the classification of a philosophy or ideology or theology, a logos, a word, while *Torah* fell into the classification of a symbol, that is, a symbol that in itself encompassed the whole of the system that the category at hand was meant to describe. The species "-ism" falls into the classification of the genus, logos, while the species, Torah, while using words, transcends words. It falls into a different classification, a species of the genus symbol. How so? The "-*ism*" category does not invoke an encompassing symbol but a system of thought. Judaism is an it, an object, a classification, an action. Torah, for its part, is an everything in one thing, a symbol. I cannot imagine a more separate and unlike set of categories than Judaism and Torah, even though both encompassed the same way of life and world view and addressed the same social group. So Torah as a category serves as a symbol, everywhere present in detail and holding all the details together. Judaism as a category serves as a statement of the main points: the intellectual substrate of it all.

The conception of Judaism as an organized body of doctrine, as in the sentence, *Judaism teaches*, or *Judaism says*, derives from an age in which people further had determined that Judaism belonged to the category of religion, and, of still more definitive importance, a religion was something that *teaches* or *says*. That is to say, Judaism is a religion, and a religion to begin with is (whatever else it is) a composition of beliefs. That age is the one at hand, the nineteenth century, and the category of religion as a distinct entity emerges from Protestant theological thought. For in Protestant theological terms, one is saved by faith. But the very components of that sentence, one—individual, not the people or holy nation, saved—personally, not in history, and saved, not sanctified, faith—not mitzvot—in fact prove incomprehensible in the categories constructed by Torah. Constructions of Judaic dogmas, the specification of a right doctrine—an orthodoxy—and the insistence that one can speak of religion apart from such adventitious matters as clothing and education (for the Orthodox of Germany who dressed like other Germans and studied in Universities, not only in yeshivas) or food (for the Reform) testify to the same fact: the end of self-evidence, the substitution of the distinction between religion and secularity, the creation of *Judaism* as the definitive category.

In fact in the idiomatic language of Torah-speech one cannot make such a statement in that way about, or in the name of, Judaism—not an operative category at all. In accord with the modes of thought and speech of the received Judaism of the dual Torah, one has to speak as subject of Israel,

not one, to address not only individual life but all of historical time, so saved by itself does not suffice, further to invoke the verb, since the category of sanctification, not only salvation must find its place, and, finally, one native to the speech of the Torah will use the words of mitzvot, not of faith alone. So the sentence serves for Protestant Christianity but not for the Torah. Of course "Judaism," Orthodox or Reform, for its part will also teach things and lay down doctrines, even dogmas.

The counterpart, in the realm of self-evidence comprised by the received Judaism of the dual Torah, of the statement, *Judaism teaches*, can only be, *the Torah requires*, and the predicate of such a sentence would be not, . . . *that God is one*, but, . . . *that you say a blessing before eating bread*. The category, Judaism, encompasses, classifies and organizes, doctrines: the faith, which, by the way, an individual adopts and professes. The category, Torah, teaches what "we," God's holy people, are and what "we" must do. The counterpart to the statement of Judaism, "God is one," then is, ". . . who has sanctified us by his commandments and commanded us to. . . ." The one teaches, that is, speaks of intellectual matters and beliefs, the latter demands—social actions and deeds of us, matters of public consequence—including, by the way, affirming such doctrines as God's unity, the resurrection of the dead, the coming of the Messiah, the revelation of the Torah at Sinai, and on and on: "we" can rival the Protestants in heroic deeds of faith. So it is true, the faith demands deeds, and deeds presuppose faith. But, categorically, the emphasis is what it is: Torah, on God's revelation, the canon, on Israel and its social way of life; Judaism, on a system of belief. That is a significant difference between the two categories.

Equally true, one would (speaking systemically) also *study Torah*. But what one studied was not an intellectual system of theology or philosophy, rather a document of revealed Scripture and law. That is not to suggest that the theologians of Judaism, Orthodox or Reform, of the nineteenth century, did not believe that God is one, or that the philosophers who taught that "Judaism teaches ethical monotheism" did not concur that, on that account, one has to say a blessing before eating bread. But the categories are different, and, in consequence, so too the composites of knowledge. A book on Judaism explains the doctrines, the theology or philosophy, of Judaism. A book of the holy Torah expounds God's will as revealed in "the one whole Torah of Moses, our rabbi," as sages teach and embody God's will. I cannot imagine two more different books, and the reason is that they represent totally different categories of intelligible discourse and of knowledge. Proof, of course, is that the latter books are literally unreadable. They form part of a genuinely oral exercise, to be cited sentence by sentence and expounded in the setting of other sentences, from other books, the whole made cogent by the speaker. That process of homogenization is how Torah works as a generative category. It obscures other lines of structure and order.

True, the two distinct categories come to bear upon the same body of data, the same holy books. But the consequent compositions—selections of facts, ordering of facts, analyses of facts, statements of conclusion and interpretation and above all, modes of public discourse, meaning who says what to whom—bear no relationship to one another, none whatsoever. Indeed, the compositions more likely than not do not even adduce the same facts, or even refer to them.

How is it that the category I see as imposed, extrinsic, and deductive, namely, "Judaism," attained the status of self-evidence? Categories serve because they are self-evident to a large group of people. In the case at hand, therefore, Judaism serves because it enjoys self-evidence as part of a larger set of categories that are equally self-evident. In all of these categories, religion constitutes a statement of belief distinct from other aspects and dimensions of human existence, so religions form a body of well-composed "-isms." So whence the category, "Judaism"? The source of the categorical power of "Judaism" derives from the Protestant philosophical heritage that has defined scholarship, including category formation, from the time of Kant onward. "*Juda*" + "*ism*" do not constitute self-evident, let alone definitive, categories—except where they do.

Judaism constitutes a category asymmetrical to the evidence adduced in its study. The category does not work because the principle of formation is philosophical and does not emerge from an unmediated encounter with the Torah. Orthodoxy can have come into existence only in Germany, and, indeed, only in that part of Germany in which the philosophical heritage of Kant and Hegel defined the categories of thought, also, for religion.

Samson Raphael Hirsch

The importance of Hirsch (1808–1888), first great intellect of Orthodoxy, derives from his philosophy of joining Torah with secular education, producing a synthesis of Torah and modern culture. He represents the strikingly new Judaism at hand, exhibiting both its strong tie to the received system but also its innovative and essentially new character. Sometimes called "neo-Orthodox,"[5] Hirsch's position, which laid stress on the possibility of living in the secular world and sustaining a fully Orthodox life, rallied the Jews of the counter-reformation. But Hirsch and his followers took over one principal position of Reform, the possibility of integrating Jews in modern society. What made Hirsch significant was that he took that view not only on utilitarian grounds, as Samet says, "but also through the acceptance of its scale of values, aiming at creating a symbiosis between traditional Orthodoxy and modern German-European culture; both in theory and in practice this meant abandonment of Torah study for its own sake and adopting instead an increased concentration on practical halakhah."[6] On that basis we rightly identify Orthodoxy as a distinct Judaism from the system of the dual Torah. Hirsch himself studied at the University of Bonn, specializing in classical languages, history, and philosophy.[7] So he did not think one had to spend all his time studying Torah, and in going to a university he implicitly affirmed that he could not define, within Torah-study, all modes of learning. Gentile professors knew things worth knowing. By contrast, of course, continuators of the Judaism of the dual Torah thought exactly the opposite: whatever is worth knowing is in the Torah.

In his rabbinical posts, Hirsch published a number of works to appeal to the younger generation. His ideal for them was the formation of a personality that would be both enlightened and observant, that is to say, educated in Western knowledge and observant of the Judaic way of life. This ideal took shape through an educational program that encompassed Hebrew language and holy literature, and also German, mathematics, sciences, and the like. In this way he proposed to respond to the Reformers' view that Judaism in its received form constituted a barrier between Jews and German society. The Reformers saw the received way of life as an obstacle to the sort of integration they thought wholesome and good. Hirsch concurred in the ideal and differed on detail. Distinctive Jewish clothing, in Hirsch's view, enjoyed a low priority. Quite to the contrary, he himself wore a ministerial gown at public worship, which did not win the approbation of the traditionalists, and when he preached, he encompassed not only the law of the Torah but other biblical matters, equally an innovation. Hirsch argued that Judaism and secular education could form a union. This would require the recognition of externals, which could be set aside, and the emphasis on the principles, which would not change. So Hirsch espoused what, in the ideas of those fully within the mentality of self-evidence, constituted selective piety, and, while the details differed, therefore fell within the classification of reform.

In his selections Hirsch included changes in the conduct of the liturgy, involving a choir, congregational singing, sermons in the vernacular—a generation earlier sure marks of Reform. But he required prayers to be said only in Hebrew and Jewish subjects to be taught in that language, and he opposed all changes in the Prayer Book itself. At the same time he sustained organizational relationships with the Reformers and tried to avoid schism. By mid-career, however, toward the middle of the century, Hirsch could not tolerate the Reformers' abrogation of the dietary laws and those affecting marital relationships, and he made

his break, accusing the Reformers of disrupting Israel's unity. In the following decades he encouraged Orthodox Jews to leave the congregations dominated by Reform, even if that was the only accessible synagogue. Separationist synagogues thus formed in the larger community.

We come now to Hirsch's framing of issues of doctrine. He constructed an affirmative system, not a negative one. His principal argument stressed that the teachings of the Torah constitute facts beyond all doubt, as much as the facts of nature do not allow for doubt. This view of the essential facticity—the absolute givenness—of the Torah led to the further conviction that human beings may not deny the Torah's teachings even when they do not grasp the Torah's meaning. Wisdom is contained within the Torah, God's will is to be found there. Just as the physical laws of nature are not conditioned by human search, so the rules of God's wisdom are unaffected by human search. The Torah constitutes an objective reality, and, in Katz's words, its laws form "an objective disposition of an established order that is not dependent on the will of the individual or society, and hence not even on historical processes."[8] Humanity nonetheless may through time gain religious truth.

What makes Israel different is that they gain access to the truth not through experience but through direct revelation. Gentile truth is truth, but derives from observation and experience. What Israel knows through the Torah comes through a different medium. That people then stands outside of history and does not have to learn religious truth through the passage of history and changes over time. Israel forms a supernatural entity, a view certainly in accord with the Judaism of the dual Torah. But when it came to explaining the way of life at hand, Hirsch went his own way. Hirsch pursued a theory of the practice of the religious life through concrete deeds—the commandments—in a highly speculative and philosophical way. He maintained that each of the deeds of the way of life represented something beyond itself, served as a symbol, not as an end in itself. So when a Jew carries out a holy deed, the deed serves to make concrete a revealed truth. This mode of thought transforms the way of life into an exercise in applied theology and practical, practiced belief. Specifically, in Katz's words:

> The performance of a commandment is not determined by simple devotion but by attachment to the religious thought represented in symbolic form by the commandment. Symbolic meanings must be attributed . . . particular to commandments which are described by the Torah itself as signs . . . and commandments which are established as pointing to historical events . . . and commandments whose entire content testifies to their symbolic character.[9]

The diverse commandments all together stand for three principles: justice, love, and "the education of ourselves and others."

Hirsch's theory of who is Israel stood at the opposite pole from that of Abraham Geiger and the Reformers. To them Israel fell into the classification of a religious community, that alone. To Hirsch Israel constituted a people, not a religious congregation, and Hirsch spoke of "national Jewish consciousness:" "The Jewish people, though it carries the Torah with it in all the lands of its dispersion, will never find its table and lamp except in the Holy Land." Israel performs a mission among the nations, to teach "that God is the source of blessing." Israel then falls between, forming its own category, because it has a state system, in the land, but also a life outside.[10] In outlining this position, Hirsch of course reaffirmed the theory of the supernatural Israel laid forth in the dual Torah. The power of the national ideal for Hirsch lay in its polemical force against the assimilationists and Reformers, whom he treated as indistinguishable:

> The contempt with which the assimilationists treat David's [fallen] tabernacle and the prayer for the sacrificial service clearly reveals the extent of their rebellion against Torah and their complete disavowal of the entire realm of Judaism. They gather the ignorant about them to whom the Book of Books, the Divine national document of their Jewish past and future, is closed with seven seals. With a conceit engendered by stupidity and a perfidy born from hatred they point to God's Temple and the Divine Service in Zion as the unholy center of the

> 'bloody cult of sacrifices.' Consequently, they make certain to eliminate any reference to the restoration of the Temple service from our prayers. The 'cultured, refined' sons and daughters of our time must turn away with utter disgust from their 'pre-historic, crude' ancestors who worship their god with bloody sacrifices. . . .

Hirsch reviews the long line of exalted leaders who affirmed sacrifice and who were not crude, e.g., Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and on. Then he concludes:

> The Jewish sacrifice expresses the highest ideal of man's and the nation's moral challenge Blood and kidney, head and limbs symbolize our service of God with every drop of blood, every emotion, every particle of our being. By performing the act of sacrifice at the place chosen by God as the site of His Law, we proclaim our determination to fulfill our lofty moral and ethical tasks to enable God to bless the site of the national vow with the presence of this glory and with the fullness of this love and grace.[11]

Hirsch's spiritualization of the sacrifices, in an ample tradition of precedent to be sure, derives from the challenge of Reform. Demanding an acceptance at face value of the Torah as the revelation of God's wisdom, Hirsch nonetheless made the effort to appeal to more than the givenness of the Torah and its commandments.

On the contrary, he entered into argument in the same terms—spiritualization, lofty moral and ethical tasks—as did the Reformers. That marks his thought as new and responsive to a fresh set of issues. As to the Reformers, he met them on their ground, as he had to, and his principal points of insistence to begin with derived from the issues defined by others. That is why we may find for him a suitable place in the larger setting of discourse among the Judaisms of the nineteenth century, all of them products of the end of self-evidence and the beginning of a self-conscious explanation for what had formerly, and elsewhere in the age at hand, the authority of the absolutely given. We see that fact most clearly when we take up a single stunning instance of the possibility of locating the several Judaisms on a single continuum: the doctrine of the Torah, what it is, where it comes from.

The Issue of Revelation and the Dual Torah

The Judaism of the dual Torah by definition maintained that not only the Hebrew Scriptures ("Old Testament") but also the entire canon of Rabbinic writings constituted that one whole Torah that Moses received at Sinai. The three Judaisms of the nineteenth century met that issue head-on. Each of the possibilities—only Scripture, everything, some things but not others—found proponents. The consequent theory of revelation had to explain the origin and authority of each of the components of the received canon. And, further, that theory of revelation had to explain what, precisely, revelation meant. The position of Orthodoxy on this matter takes on significance only in the larger context of the debate with Reform. Reform through Geiger took the view that revelation was progressive. The Bible derived from "the religious genius of the Jewish people." Orthodoxy through Hirsch, for example, saw the Torah as wholly and completely God's word. A middle position, represented by Conservative Judaism, espoused both views. God revealed the written Torah, which was supplemented by "the ongoing revelation manifesting itself throughout history in the spirit of the Jewish people."[12]

Orthodoxy of course could not concur. The issue pertained to the historical identification of those responsible for the Rabbinic writings. The Conservatives, in the person of Zechariah Frankel, a contemporary of Hirsch, maintained that the whole of the Rabbinic corpus derived from scribes and their successors. These authorities adapted the system of Scripture by inventing the notion of the oral Torah. The Orthodox could not concede such a break. The positive historical school, in Wurzburger's description, held that "the religious consciousness of the Jewish people provided the supreme religious authority, [while] the Orthodox position rested upon the belief in the supernatural origin of the Torah which was addressed to a 'Chosen People.'" So the theory of who is Israel joined to the issue of revelation: how, what, when. The Orthodox position, as outlined by Hirsch, saw Israel as a supernatural people that has in

hand a supernatural revelation. The entirety of the dual Torah and the writings flowing from it constitute that revelation. Quite how this notion of a long sequence of revealed documents differs from the conception of a progressive revelation is not entirely clear, but in context it made a considerable difference. For in his affirmation of the entirety of the Torah, written and oral, as the revealed will of God, Hirsch marked the limns of Orthodoxy and made them coincide with the precise boundaries of the received dual Torah. Whether those to whom the supernatural character of Israel and the entirety of Torah formed self-evident truths will have understood Hirsch's careful explanations of matters outside of the received modes of apologetics, however, must come under doubt. For the one thing the traditionalist grasped, the absolute givenness of the whole, Hirsch could not concede. How do we know it? Because he explained and explained and explained.

What is New in Orthodoxy

That Hirsch's Orthodoxy flows directly out of the received system no one doubts. But it also takes a position separate from that system in both doctrine and method. Hirsch spent much energy defending the practice of the religious duties called commandments, such as circumcision, the wearing of fringes on garments, the use, in morning worship, of *tefillin* (commonly translated phylacteries), and the sacrificial cult and Temple. These he treats not as mere data—givens of the holy life. Rather, he transforms them into symbols of a meaning beyond. And that exercise, in his context, testifies to the utter self-consciousness of the Judaism at hand, hence to the formation of a new Judaism out of received materials, no less than Reform Judaism constituted a new Judaism out of those same received materials. For the sole necessity for making up such symbolic explanations derived from decision: defend these, at all costs. Equivalent explanations and a counterpart process of articulated defense of the holy way of life hardly struck as equivalently urgent the contemporaries of Hirsch living in the villages of the East.

When, therefore, Hirsch invoked the parallel, to which we have already alluded, between the study of nature and the study of the Torah, he expressed the freshness, the inventiveness, of his own system, thereby testifying to the self-consciousness at hand. A sizable abstract provides a good view of Hirsch's excellent mode of thought and argument:

> One word here concerning the proper method of Torah investigation. Two revelations are open before us, that is, nature and the Torah. In nature all phenomena stand before us as indisputable facts, and we can only endeavor a posteriori to ascertain the law of each and the connection of all. Abstract demonstration of the truth, or rather, the probability of theoretical explanations of the acts of nature, is an unnatural proceeding. The right method is to verify our assumptions by the known facts, and the highest attainable degree of certainty is to be able to say: 'The facts agree with our assumption'—that is, all the phenomena observed can be explained according to our theory. A single contradictory phenomenon will make our theory untenable. We must, therefore, acquire all the knowledge possible concerning the object of our investigation and know it, if possible, in its totality. If, however, all efforts should fail in disclosing the inner law and connection of phenomena revealed to us as facts in nature, the facts remain, nevertheless, undeniable and cannot be reasoned away.
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> The same principles must be applied to the investigation of the Torah. In the Torah, even as in nature, God is the ultimate cause. In the Torah, even as in nature, no fact may be denied, even though the reason and the connection may not be understood. What is true in nature is true also in the Torah: the traces of divine wisdom must ever be sought. Its ordinances must be accepted in their entirety as undeniable phenomena and must be studied in accordance with their connection to each other, and the subject to which they relate. Our conjectures must be tested by their precepts, and our highest certainty here also can only be that everything stands in harmony with our theory.
>
> In nature the phenomena are recognized as facts, though their cause and relationship to each other may not be understood and are independent of our investigation. So too the ordinances of the Torah must be law for us, even if we do not comprehend the reason and the purpose of a single one. Our fulfillment of the commandments must not depend on our investigations.[13]

Here we have the counterpart, in argument, to Hirsch's theory of Torah and worldly learning. Just as Hirsch maintained the union of the two, so in the deepest structure of his thought he worked out that same union. Natural science dictated rules of inquiry, specifically, the requirement that we explain phenomena through a theory that we can test. The phenomenon is the given. Then, for the Torah, the requirements of the Torah constitute the givens, which demand explanation, but which must be accepted as facts even when explanation fails. Clearly, Hirsch addressed an audience that had come to doubt the facticity of the facts of the Torah in a way in which none doubted the facticity of the facts of nature.

Once we compare the Torah to nature, the Torah no longer defines the world-view and the way of life at hand. Rather, the Torah takes its place as part of a larger world-view and way of life, one in which the Israelite-human being (in Hirsch's happy concept) has to accommodate both the received of the Torah and the given of nature. The insistence that the process of accommodation—"studied in accordance with their connection . . . and the subject to which they relate"—testifies to a world view essentially distinct from the one of the received system of the dual Torah. In this new world view the Torah demands explanation, its rules find themselves reduced to the lesser dimensions of an apologia of symbolism, so that they form not givens in an enduring and eternal way of life, but objects of analysis, defense, above all, reasoned decision. True, Hirsch insisted, "Our fulfillment of the commandments must not depend on our investigations." But the investigations must go forward, and that, in and of itself, tells us we deal with a new Judaism.

Orthodoxy never claimed to mark the natural next step in the history of Judaism. Orthodoxy saw itself as nothing other than Judaism. In its near-total symmetry with the received system, Orthodoxy surely made a powerful case for that claim. But the fact that the case had to be made, the context and conditions of contention—these form the indicators that another Judaism was coming into being. The asymmetrical points, moreover, demand attention, though, on their own, they should not decisively refute the position of Orthodoxy. What does is the existence of an Orthodoxy at all. The single most interesting instance of a Judaism of self-consciousness, Orthodoxy defends propositions that, in the received system, scarcely reached a level of articulate discourse, for instance, the absolute necessity to conform to the holy way of life of the Torah. The necessity for making such an argument testifies to the fact that people, within Orthodoxy, thought they confronted the need to choose and did choose.

True, the choices, from the viewpoint of Orthodoxy, fell in the right direction. But Orthodoxy formed an act of restoration and renewal, therefore an act of innovation. The modes of argument of Hirsch, representative as they are of the mentality of the Orthodoxy he defined, call into question the linear descent of Orthodoxy from what people called "tradition." An incremental progress, perhaps, but a lineal and unbroken journey, no. But even the incremental theory of the history of Judaism, which, in the case of Orthodoxy, identifies Hirsch's Orthodoxy with the system of the dual Torah, fails to take note of facts, and, as Hirsch himself argues, that failure suffices. The facts that people, Hirsch included, made clear-cut choices, identifying some things as essential, others not (clothing, for one important instance). If the piety of Reform proved selective, the selections that Hirsch made place him into the classification, also, of one who sorted out change and made changes. Just as the Reformers of the nineteenth century laid emphasis on the points of continuity they located between themselves and the past, so, of course, did the Orthodox (and, from their perspective, with better reason). Just as the Orthodox of the nineteenth century specify what mattered more than something else, so of course, did the Reform (and, from their perspective, with greater relevance to the situation at hand).

The political changes that in the aggregate created an abyss between the Judaism of the dual Torah and the new, theological Judaisms of the nineteenth century affected both the Reform and the Orthodox of the age. They stood in a single line—one that broke off en route to (so to speak) Sinai,

that is, to the Judaism of the dual Torah. So in Orthodoxy we find powerful indication of a system standing in an incremental relationship with the received system, but still more striking symptoms of a system formed afresh and anew.

Continuity or new creation? Both—but, therefore, by definition, new creation. Piety selected is by definition piety invented, and Hirsch emerges as one of the intellectually powerful creators of a Judaism. "Torah and secular learning" defined a new world view, dictated a new way of life, and addressed a different Israel, from the Judaism of the dual Torah. To those who received that dual Torah as self-evident what the Torah did not accommodate was secular learning. The Torah as they received it did not approve changes in the familiar way of life, and did not know an Israel other than the one at hand. So the perfect faith of Orthodoxy sustained a wonderfully selective piety. The human greatness of Hirsch and the large number of Jews who found self-evident the possibility of living the dual life of Jew and German or Jew and American? It lay in the power of the imagination to locate in a new circumstance a rationale for inventing tradition.

The human achievement of Orthodoxy demands more than routine notice. Living in a world that only grudgingly accommodated difference and did not like Jews' difference in particular, the Orthodox followed the rhythm of the week to the climax of the Sabbath, of the seasons to the climactic moments of the festivals. They adhered to their own pattern of daily life, with prayers morning, noon, and night. They married only within the holy people. They ate only food that had been prepared in accord with the rules of sanctification. They honored philosophy and culture, true, but these they measured by their own revealed truth as well. It was not easy for them to keep the faith when so many within Jewry, and so many more outside, wanted Jews to be pretty much the same as everyone else. The human costs cannot have proved trivial. To affirm when the world denies, to keep the faith against all evidence—that represents that faith that in other settings people honored. It was not easy for either the Orthodox of Germany or the immigrant Jews of America, who in an ocean voyage moved from the world of self-evident faith to the one of insistent denial of the faith.

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NOTES

[1] Nathaniel Katzburg and Walter S. Wurzburger, "Orthodoxy," *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, vol. 12, col. 1486–1493.
[2] Op. cit., col. 1487.
[3] Op. cit., col. 1488.
[4] Op. cit., col. 1490.
[5] Moshe Shraga Samet, "Neo-Orthodoxy," *Encylopaedia Judaica*, vol. 12, col. 956–958.
[6] Op. cit., col. 957.
[7] Simha Katz, "Samson (ben) Raphael Hirsch," *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, vol. 8, col. 508–515.
[8] Op. cit., col. 512–513.
[9] Op. cit., col. 513.
[10] Op. cit., col. 514.
[11] Samson Raphael Hirsch, *The Collected Writings* (New York and Jerusalem, 1984), vol. 1, pp. 388–389.
[12] Wurzburger, col. 1489.
[13] Hirsch, op. cit., vol. III, pp. xiii–xiv.

Other Religions, Judaic Doctrines of

JUDAISM is primarily an inward looking religion. Its theology defines Judaism's own goals, aspirations, and problems but seldom evidences any concern for, or interest in, those outside its faith community.[1] While traditional Jews believe that their deity daily (re-)creates the entire world,[2] controls all of the world's activities, and is the God of all humankind, still they focus on the fact that at Sinai God entered into a special relationship with the People Israel in particular. Judaism focuses almost without exception on that exclusive covenant and on its implications for the everyday life of Jews. Only at a secondary level are the present and future states of non-Jews of concern. God created all of humankind, and everyone has an obligation to do YHWH's

will; however, in the Jewish view, God, not the people of Israel, is responsible for assuring non-Jews' compliance. For that reason the beliefs, actions, and status of non-Jews in the eyes of God receive relatively little attention in Jewish sources.

Rabbinic Perspectives on Non-Jews

The Rabbinic texts of the first centuries C.E. exhibit so little interest in non-Jews that they seldom even distinguish among the variety of non-Jewish religions and ethnic groups. While the rabbis define fine distinctions among different types of Jews, they lump together virtually all non-Israelites.[3] Humanity is divided between us and them, Israelites, *benai yisrael*, and "nations," *goyim*. Seldom do the Rabbinic documents clearly differentiate among Christians, non-Christians, worshippers of Zeus, followers of the Isis cult, or devotees of any other religious system other than Judaism. In the Talmud and midrashic texts, all non-Israelites are *goyim*, and, unless otherwise noted, gentiles are idolaters, "worshippers of the stars and planets," or those who practice "a strange ritual."[4]

The earliest Rabbinic texts, the Mishnah and the Tosefta, discuss non-Israelites primarily in order to sharpen and refine their definition of Israelites. One's identity is created by comparison to that of others, so that the first step in my determining who is like me is to delineate the traits of those who are not like me.[5] Because the sages of the Mishnah and Tosefta are not interested in gentiles *qua* gentiles, they offer us little specific or detailed information about them or their religions. The earliest Rabbinic documents, the Mishnah and Tosefta, deal with the non-Jew from the Jewish point of view and in terms of specifically Rabbinic legal categories and paradigms. References to non-Jews thus serve to illuminate the laws that apply to Jews without telling us much about the non-Jews at all. In response to specific social, religious, and political situations that forced Jews to interact more immediately with non-Jews, later Jewish documents—the Talmuds and midrashic books—by contrast, do discuss other religious systems that were active in ancient Palestine and Babylonia. But these comments too are always from the Jewish point of view and tend to be schematic and generalized, reflecting the propagandistic needs of the talmudic authors rather than the reality of the non-Jewish religion and culture. For example, they spend much more time discussing *Ba'al Peor* and the *Asherot*, idols known from biblical times, than they do the Christianity or religion of the Magi contemporary in their own day.

Although YHWH is the God of the People Israel and the deity of all humankind, the Bible and the Rabbinic texts do not have the same religious expectations for non-Israelites as they do for Israelites. With the exception of Isaiah 45, the Hebrew Bible does not insist that the non-Israelite nations give up their idols and idolatrous rituals. Scripture condemns *Israelites* who worship idols because this violates the covenant between them and YHWH. But the Bible does not insist that in the present era the other nations give up their gods. The nations' idols may be useless and silly, but because the "nations" have not had the same religio-historical experiences as the Israelites, they do not have the same obligations as the People Israel. In light of the Sinai covenant, idolatry represents a danger to the Israelites and must not be tolerated in their midst. As a result, gentiles who wish to reside among Israelites must give up their idolatrous rituals. But other gentiles need not. As David Novak states, "For although idolatry is frequently ridiculed in Scripture as nonsense, it is nonsense for only the people of Israel who are to know better because of the covenant. Gentiles, therefore, cannot be faulted for their own idolatry as long as they do not infect the people of Israel with it" (Novak, p. 37). Gentiles "cannot be morally faulted for unfaithfulness to a covenant in which they themselves are not participants" (Novak, p. 38).

The opinion of the Rabbinic documents is slightly more complicated (Stern, pp. 27–29, 141–162, 187–197). Again, all Jewish practice of idolatry is condemned, and the major concern of *Avodah Zarah*, the talmudic tractate on idolatry, is to guarantee that Israelites have no opportunity to engage in,

to appear to engage in, or to aid a gentile who engages in idolatry. At the same time, the inclusion of a prohibition against idolatry in the Noachide laws,[6] the seven obligations the rabbis understood to be incumbent even upon gentiles, indicates that at least some rabbis expected "righteous" gentiles also to give up their idolatrous ways. But this view is tempered by others that accept idolatry as a fact of gentile culture and that do not seem overly concerned with it (see, e.g., B. Hul. 13b). And while the rabbis generally hold that all idolatrous shrines must be eliminated from the Land of Israel, YHWH's Land, they do not apply this rule to other geographical regions. So, as in the Mishnah, later Rabbinic texts are not concerned with what non-Jews do within their own social or geographical areas. Non-Jews are of no major concern unless Israelites come into contact with them. Only at that point, in order to regulate the Israelites' actions, must the rabbis also imagine restrictions to be applicable to gentiles.

The Jewish Perspective on Early Christianity

For the most part, it should have been fairly easy to distinguish between Judaism and the other religions of the ancient world. Non-Jews' deities were different, their sacred books were uniquely theirs, their rituals were foreign, and their ethnic identity was distinctive. However, with the advent of Christianity the situation became ambiguous. Christians claimed to be monotheistic, appropriated the Hebrew Bible (albeit in Greek) as its own Scripture, and took the God of the Bible as their own deity. Originating in YHWH's Holy Land and among YHWH's covenanted people, the believers in Christ challenged Judaism at its very core. Christianity was not a "strange ritual" in the usual sense of the term; in fact, this religion must have appeared to the rabbis to be all *too* familiar. It clearly seemed recognizable and familiar to numerous Palestinian Jews, for they soon became followers of what started as a Jewish sect and quickly became a separate religion. Indeed, only in the middle of the third century C.E. were Romans able to distinguish between Jews and Christians at all.

In light of Christianity's clear challenge to Rabbinic Judaism, it is surprising that we do not find more overt discussions of this religion.[7] One reason may be that medieval Christian censors deleted or forced the Jews to alter overt references to Christians and Christianity. But even this being the case, it appears clear that Christianity was not a major focus within the Rabbinic corpus. The rabbis identify a few figures as Christians or even as Jesus himself, and a small number of Rabbinic discussions, especially in the *mid-rashim*, clearly refer to Christianity. Some midrashic and talmudic discussions even appear to be oblique answers to the Christian challenge. But not every Rabbinic text that discusses the unity of YHWH was a response to the Christian notion of the trinity, nor need every reference to humanity's inherent goodness have been a response to the doctrine of original sin.[8] In short, the Rabbinic documents provide little information concerning the rabbis' opinion of Christianity, other than the fact that it was treated like every other non-Jewish system. It was primarily ignored.[9]

The paucity of overt references to Christianity in the Rabbinic texts may be attributed to several factors. Early Christianity was viewed by the Jewish and Roman authorities as a Jewish sect. It is doubtful that the early rabbis saw Christianity as any more threatening than any other of the various messianic movements found within the Jewish population of the first century C.E. Many probably thought that it was best to ignore these people, assuming that eventually they would see the folly of their ways. This would have been the case especially after Jesus' ignoble death. While there is some evidence that early on Jews worked to persuade the Roman authorities that the Christians posed a threat to the social order and the Empire's well-being, by the fourth century, a thoroughly gentile Christianity was a formidable force within the Roman Empire and the religion of the Emperors. Eventually, disparaging remarks about Christianity or even theological challenges were severely punished.

Throughout the New Testament there

are indications that the Jews persecuted the early Christians. In Gal. 5:11 Paul claims that he is persecuted because he does not require gentiles to be circumcised before joining the Church. In 2 Cor. 11:24–25 Paul writes, "Five times I have received at the hands of the Jews the forty lashes less one. Three times I have been beaten with rods; once was I stoned." The flogging of thirty-nine lashes was a recognized Jewish method of punishment; a whole tractate of the Mishnah, *Makkot*, focuses on the lashes. Stoning was also an accepted form of punishment or execution for specific violations of Jewish law. However, it is impossible to determine if these acts were those of a community, a mob, or individuals.[10] The evidence in Acts is similarly ambiguous with regard to the organized nature of the persecutions (Seltzer, pp. 58–65). Claudia Seltzer notes that because the Jews depended on Roman largess for their peace and prosperity, they would have objected to Christian missionaries' disrupting the status quo. She writes, "The Jews may have worried that they would be guilty by association with Jewish Christian missionaries and incur Roman displeasure" (p. 23). This of course assumes that the Romans did not view the Christians of Paul's letters and the Book of Acts as distinct from Palestinian Jews. With regard to these Jewish attempts to suppress early Christianity, Jack T. Sanders writes:[11]

> The Temple leadership . . . sought periodically to destroy Christianity. . . . In and near Jerusalem . . . Paul first carried out and later received synagogue punishment directed against Christian missionaries. I have been able to unearth no good direct cause of this hostility towards the Jewish Christians other than the fact that some renegades among them, like Paul, admitted gentiles . . . without requiring those gentiles to become proselytes to Judaism [by being circumcised]. There is also the possibility of a continuing criticism of the Temple cultus on the part of self-righteous Christians resident in Jerusalem. . . . For the period between the wars . . . our evidence shifts to Galilee, where we find Jewish Christians being excluded from synagogues and declared heretics. . . . [D]eveloping Rabbinic Judaism finds them guilty of the heresy of making Jesus equal to God and causing enmity and strife between God and his people.

Sanders also stresses that the Christians' opposition to the Temple, the Jewish "cultural symbol par excellence," would have put them outside of the main symbolic system of Judaism. He further maintains that their attacks on the Torah and the law must have appeared to be subversive to the leaders of the Jewish community (p. 99). But these same practices led to no similar persecutions of groups that remained within Judaism. The Babylonian Talmud attributes to first and second century sages a major disagreement concerning the necessity of circumcising converts.[12] Furthermore, those who lived at Qumran believed that the Temple in Jerusalem had been corrupted by its present leadership and that the "wicked priest" had killed the "Teacher of Righteousness." Yet, there is no evidence of Jewish persecutions of those who followed the practices of Qumran, just as the rabbis who would have accepted uncircumcised converts were accorded no approbation.

The Jewish documents suggest that between the revolts of 70 and 135 C.E., Christianity was lumped together with the other Jewish heresies under the category of *minut* (Sanders, p. 128), Jewish sectarianism; Christians were not viewed as a distinct religion. Seltzer, for instance, finds no evidence in the Synoptic Gospels that Jews viewed Christians as outsiders (pp. 42–43). She argues that in the early days of the movement, Jewish crowds in Jerusalem were "curious and amazed by the miracles and words of early Christian preachers" (p. 57). While Acts 19 points to Paul's preaching in Ephesus as the final point of the positive Jewish response to his message, Acts 23 describes some Pharisees in Jerusalem as arguing in support of Paul before the Sanhedrin (pp. 57–58). Surely Acts contains many references to Paul's sufferings at the hands of the Jews. But Seltzer concludes that these are literary and rhetorical devices and have little historical value (pp. 58–65).

The evidence from most of the early Christian and Jewish sources indicates that at first the Jews considered the Christians to be a Jewish group, even if, from the start, at least some Christians saw themselves as distinct from other Jews (Seltzer,

pp. 185–188). While Nero appears able to differentiate between Jews and Christians, Domitian was either unable or unwilling to do so (Simon, p. 117). By the middle of the second century, the situation changed. The Martyrdom of Polycarp, the Gospel of Peter, and some early inscriptions indicate that the Jews now considered Christians to be outsiders, and that the former turned to the Roman authorities to suppress the followers of Jesus (Seltzer, pp. 114–125). Thus, after the Bar Kokhba war, "in the eyes of ancient Judaism, Christianity represented not merely an arbitrary break in the tradition but a revolutionary innovation" (Simon, p. 78).

Jews defined Christians as deviant because Christianity challenged their own Jewish identity. At stake, that is, were not mere theological differences. This meant that as Christianity became more and more influenced by its new gentile members, the Jewish community strove to separate itself from the new religion in order to establish firmly its own uniqueness. Sanders concludes (p. 141):

> The Jewish leadership punished early Christianity not primarily because the Christians were following deviant halakhah or because they called Jesus God, or because they proclaimed a crucified Messiah, or even because they criticized the temple cultus and questioned the validity of Torah, but because events were leading enforcers of Judaic identity to maintain the boundaries of Judaism while the Christians were breaking though those boundaries in one way or another.

Interestingly, it is likely that the codification of the Mishnah at about this same time stems from the same urge firmly to establish the parameters of Jewish identity.

Writings from this period reflect the extent to which the conflict between Judaism and Christianity was, as much as about theology, an argument about self-identity. Justin's *Dialogue with Trypho*, for instance, pays careful attention to demonstrating the validity of Christ and Christianity on the basis of the Hebrew Bible. He attempts to demonstrate that the Hebrew Bible's references to the election of the Jews refer to the Christians. The *Dialogue* contains a substantial number of references to the Jewish mistreatment of Christians, including their attacks, ridicule, curses and slanders. Within this context, Justin often mentions the Jews' hatred of Christians (Seltzer, pp. 135–146; Sanders, p. 50).

In his *Contra Celsus*, Origin shows that the disputes between the Jews and Christians focused on Jesus' life, with the Jews claiming that Jesus' disciples invented the tales about his life, such as the virgin birth. In truth, according to Origin's Jews, Jesus was an illegitimate child, and the story of his resurrection was a pure fabrication by his disciples, a band of lowlifes and rabbles. In addition, the Jews do not understand how the Christians can claim to accept the Hebrew Bible when they ignore the commandments (Seltzer, pp. 149–154).

The early Church Fathers are consistent in their claims that the Jews debated the Christians concerning correct interpretations of the Hebrew Bible, Jesus' legitimacy, and the truth of his resurrection. Jerome, Cyril of Jerusalem, and Eusebius all maintain that the Jews initiated these conversations and debates (Simon, p. 177). While these assertions by Christian writers may be historically accurate, they may also be a way for the Church Fathers to underscore their position that Judaism now had to defend itself from Christianity's claims to be God's chosen people.

Once Christianity became the official religion of the Roman emperors and the Empire, the position of Judaism and Jews dramatically changed. From the time of Julius Caesar, Judaism had been a legitimate religion within the Empire, and the Jews enjoyed the right to practice their ancient traditions. They were freed from certain obligations incumbent upon other citizens, such as participating in official pagan rituals connected to the political process. In addition, they were permitted to send a regular assessment to Jerusalem to support the Temple.

With the failure of the two wars against Rome, many of these rights had been eliminated or curtailed. The Jews were not allowed to enter Jerusalem, and the Temple half-*sheqel* now went to the Emperor. But, the Jews still were held in fairly high regard

by the Roman officials, as the Rabbinic stories about Judah the Patriarch and the Emperor indicate (Simon, pp. 126–132). The situation changed completely after Constantine's conversion, and by the beginning of the fifth century Christianity enjoyed the status of *religio*, while the term *superstitio* applied to Judaism.[13] Roman-Christian law now sought to confine the scope of Judaism and the power of Jews. The Theodotian and Justinian codes reduced the ability of Jews to interact socially, politically, and economically with Christians and other non-Jews. The Empire's law codes sought to isolate the Jews as much as possible. It became illegal for Jews to disparage Christians or to try to encourage Jewish converts to Christianity to return to their native faith.[14]

The Jewish View of Christians and Christianity in the Medieval Period

Pope Gregory I (590–604) set the tone for much of the Christian medieval legislation and mythology concerning the Jews. As long as the Jews acted in accordance with Church law, they would be permitted to worship in their synagogues freely and without interference. Similarly, they should not be subject to forced baptism. Gregory saw a theological importance to the continued presence of the Jews in Christian lands. He maintained that God has allowed the Jews to live among Christians, so that they might bear witness to the truth of Christian doctrine. As long as the Jews were scattered throughout Christendom and lived as second-class citizens under Christian domination, the truth of the Christian claim that they alone enjoy God's favor would be manifest to everyone (Cohen, pp. 36–38).

Christianity took a good deal of time to convert Europe and to put its plan with regard to the Jews into place. After Charlemagne converted on Christmas day, 800, he and his descendants treated the Jews extremely well. The Carolingian rulers understood and profited from the Jews' international economic contacts, and the relationships between Jews and non-Jews were quite positive. Jews had a virtual monopoly on the import and export of goods within the empire. Although Church leaders such as Agobard objected to the positive treatment of the Jews, their position remained stable throughout much of the tenth century.

The Crusades and the widespread desire to rid the world of non-Christians and heretics poisoned the European atmosphere in which Jews interacted with Christians. The Jewish communities of the Lorraine and near the Rhine were among the first to suffer at the hands of the Crusaders, beginning in January, 1096. The practice of *qiddush haShem*, of committing suicide rather than betraying Judaism and God, became common within some European Jewish communities at this time.[15] The thirteenth century witnessed the first examples of the papacy's interfering with the free practice of Judaism. Both Gregory IX and Innocent IV investigated the Talmud and had copies burned. Clement IV in 1267 extended the Inquisition's authority to Jews who were suspected of influencing Christians, thus promoted the heresy of Judaizing Christianity (Cohen, pp. 38–40).

Little Jewish literature has survived from the early Middle Ages, and before the twelfth century there are no Jewish works that discuss Christianity. In any case, before the twelfth century Christianity did not pose a real threat to Judaism. The advent of the Crusades was an overt indication of the changing European landscape, as more and more the Jews found themselves in a tenuous situation. Eventually, they came to live in a world politically, economically, and socially dominated by hostile Christians. Within this environment Jews enjoyed few inherent rights, and they faced a constant external threat to their integrity and stability as a people and as a religion. Christianity openly challenged the Jews to demonstrate that the Christians were not correct in their interpretations of the Jewish Bible, in their descriptions of the trinitarian deity of the Old and New Testaments, and in their claim to the rewards of the Jewish covenant.

The medieval Jewish biblical commentators sought to re-establish the absolute validity of the Rabbinic interpretations of the biblical texts. Within his authoritative biblical commentary, Solomon b. Isaac of Troyes (1040–1105), known as Rashi, emphasized

the Jewish interpretations of those verses that were central to the Christian community (Cohen, p. 141). In late antiquity the Jews had rejected allegorical interpretations, a method widespread among Christian exegetes, in favor of the literal reading of biblical texts (Simon, p. 150). Rashi claimed that his commentary sought to expound only the *peshat*, the simple meaning of the verses. In addition, he drew freely and often upon the wealth of Rabbinic midrashic interpretations available to him. Rashi set the pattern for latter commentators, such as Samuel b. Meir, his grandson, and Joseph Qara, one of his first students. The Jews believed that by undercutting the Christian interpretations of the Bible they could underscore Christianity's implausibility.[16]

Joseph Kimhi's (ca. 1105–1170) *Book of the Covenant* is most probably the first European Jewish anti-Christian polemic. He argued that the conduct of the Jews demonstrates that they are God's people. The Jews, not the Christians, follow the Ten Commandments, live moral lives, teach their children to fear God, and regularly give to charity. Only the Christian ascetics, who are not representative of Christianity as a whole, live similar exemplary lives. Kimhi's work, like most of the rest of the medieval anti-Christian Jewish polemical literature, frequently revolved around the biblical text. As the thirteenth century *Old Book of Polemic*, an anonymous collection of Jewish anti-Christian arguments current among Franco-German Jews, demonstrates, to the Jews, Christianity was irrational and its interpretations of the Hebrew Bible unreasonable. Jews often initiated discussions with Christians over doctrinal questions under the assumption that Christianity's irrationality could be demonstrated easily. Although many of the Christological interpretations were rather far-fetched, others were taken seriously by Jewish writers. Often the Jewish commentator would point to the verse's context and argue that the passage referred to historical figures, not to the messiah. Another approach was to note that when read in its entirety, the Bible consistently maintained that the messiah would be a human being who would usher in a period of idyllic peace in the world. By pointing to the contemporary political situation, the Jews challenged the Christian claim that the world had changed with the advent of Jesus. By rejecting the Christian allegorical interpretations of the Hebrew Bible, the Jews maintained that the ritual law continued to be binding; the biblical verses that described it meant exactly what they said (Berger, pp. 7–15).

The Jews often challenged the rationality of Christian dogma. While some Jews conceded that it was theoretically possible for God to have caused a virgin to conceive and bear a child, many held that the Incarnation was impossible, even for an omnipotent deity. The Jewish views on human nature and God's justice would not allow them to accept the doctrine of original sin, the universal damnation of humankind, or the fact that unbaptized infants could not enter heaven. The Jewish writers were disdainful of Jesus' miracles, and they often expressed wonderment that those events impressed Jesus' followers (Berger, p. 15). The trinity also was a subject of much Jewish criticism. At the end of the twelfth century, David Kimhi argued that logically, a father must proceed a son; therefore, it is impossible for Jesus and God to be coexistent. This whole trend of Jewish argument was summarized by Nahmanides, who wrote that Christian doctrine is irrational and not accepted by nature.[17]

Thus, Jews challenged the logic of Christianity's doctrinal claims, the Christian interpretations of Scripture, and also the Christian reading of history. David Kimhi objected to the Christian claim that its validity was established by the fact that it had spread throughout the world, for Ishmael and Israel, among other nations, had not accepted it (Talmage, p. 75). In the sixteenth century, Isaac b. Abraham of Troki rejected the Christian argument that its age demonstrated the truth of its theological claims. He pointed out that Islam is a thousand years old (Talmage, p. 15), and Judaism is over three thousand years old. Nahmanides even noted that the Muslim empire was much larger than that controlled by Rome and the Christians (Talmage, p. 86).

These polemical responses to Christianity did not represent an organized effort by the

Jewish community to refute the Christian claims or arguments. Rather, they were *ad hoc* or *ad hominem*. Further, while this literature shows a direct interest in and desire to discredit Christianity, most of the Jewish literature and thought in this period simply continued the Rabbinic practice of ignoring the non-Jewish world and its religions. And, despite the clear anti-Christian polemic within the sphere of social legislation, Christianity by this period was held by Jews not to be a form of idolatry at all. This meant that, in most regards, Christians were considered to be appropriate business partners for Jews.

Indeed, the major issue facing Jews who had to interact socially and economically with Christians was the question of idolatry. Rabbinic law forbids Jews from supporting idolatry, even indirectly. M. A. Z. 1:1 forbids Jews from engaging in business dealings with idolaters for three days before their festivals, and in the following passage, Ishmael forbids business dealings three days after their festivals as well. If Christians are idolaters and Sunday constitutes a religious festival, business dealings between Jews and Christians would be virtually prohibited. Similarly, the Talmud forbids Jews from deriving benefit from wine with which an idolater has come into contact at any stage in its production, from the picking of the grapes to bottling. If Christians are idolaters, from whom do Jews purchase wine for their various ritual needs? Therefore, for the medieval Jew, the question of whether Christianity was a form of monotheism or just one more idolatrous religion had important practical consequences.

Maimonides, who lived under Muslim rule and had no direct knowledge of or experience with Christians, classified Christianity as idolatry and, on the basis of Ishmael's ruling in the Mishnah, forbade all business dealings with them. In light of the icons churches contained, he also declared these places idolatrous shrines and did not permit Jews to visit them or live in towns that contained them. Christianity had negated the authority of the Torah, rejected the commandments, and elevated Jesus above Moses, creating an erroneous messianism. It was a polytheistic faith, and for that reason it could not be a repository of divine revelation.[18]

Although Maimonides rejected Christianity's assertion that it was a monotheistic religion, he did find a positive role for it in the messianic scheme. Christianity can bring the world to the worship of the One God because it finds its roots within the Hebrew Bible. Maimonides writes (Novak, p. 64):

> It is permitted to teach the commandments to Christians and to draw them to our religion . . . [because] the uncircumcised ones believe that the version of the torah has not changed, only they interpret it with their faulty exegesis. . . . But when the Scriptural texts shall be interpreted with correct exegesis it is possible that they shall return to what is best. There is nothing that they shall find in their Scriptures that differs from ours.

At present, Christianity is idolatrous because it has misinterpreted the Hebrew Bible, and trinitarian doctrines have misled Christians to place icons within their churches. However, because they accept the Divine character of the Hebrew Scriptures, they can, in theory, be taught the correct interpretations, so that they will discard their erroneous beliefs and practices. But, until that time, they must be treated as idolaters, "and all Torah restrictions pertaining to idolaters pertain to them" (Novak, p. 57).

Maimonides lived in an Islamic environment, and he had the luxury of condemning a Christianity with which he had no direct contact. The sages living within Christian Europe had no such luxury, and so many of them expressed a different view. These authorities were careful to limit the application to Christians of Talmudic law. For instance, the Talmud explains that the Mishnah forbids Jews from engaging in business dealings with gentiles near the time of their festivals specifically out of fear that the gentiles would use the money they received to support idol worship. Jacob Tam, a twelfth century French sage, accordingly ruled that Jews could do business with Christians in any item except those that were designed specifically for a religious purpose. But the simple exchange of money was no matter of concern. For even if one

were to classify Christians as idolaters, one cannot distinguish the money they will use to support their religion from money they employ for non-religious purposes. Jews need not fear that the funds they pay the Christians will be improperly used.

More than this, Tam in fact did not consider Christians to be idolaters. This is clear in his treatment of the Talmudic rule that prohibits Jews from drinking or benefiting from the wine of non-Jews, which is based on the Talmudic belief that all gentiles 1) dedicate a small portion of any wine with which they came into contact to their idols (B. San. 60b, B. A.Z. 29b), that they 2) would be thinking of their idols when they purchased the wine, or 3) that trading in wine would lead to extended social interactions which would finally end up in intermarriage (B. A.Z. 36b). While not permitting Jews to drink wine with which Christians had come into contact, Tam, following his grandfather, Rashi, permitted Jews to derive other benefit from gentile wine, which meant they could buy and sell it for profit. Tam's position implies that he has placed the Christians somewhere between Jews and the Talmud's idolaters (Novak, pp. 45–46).

Tam faced another problem that forced him to express clearly his understanding of Christian worship. In the Talmud, Samuel's father prohibits Jews from entering into a partnership with non-Jews, because the gentile will "become obligated to swear an oath by his god" (B. San. 63b). While the rabbi's original intention may have been to permit the Jew to enter into a partnership as long as he did not require his gentile partner to take an oath by the latter's god, this eventually became an absolute prohibition against business partnerships between Jews and non-Jews. Tam, facing a very different environment from that of the talmudic sages, excludes Christians from the Talmud's restrictions. He argued that although the Christians are thinking about the true God, they swear by the names of their saints, "to whom they did not ascribe divinity. . . ." Even though they associate the name of God with something else, "we do not find that it is forbidden to indirectly cause others to perform such association" (Novak, pp. 46–47).

In his efforts to sanction interaction between Jews and Christians, Menahem b. Solomon, known as Ha-Meiri, a fourteenth century Provensal sage, focused on Christianity's moral code. He argued that Christians are righteous gentiles, because they accept the seven Noachide commandments as Scripturally ordained. This means they have rejected polytheism. While the Talmud presumed that gentiles were idolaters, Ha-Meiri presumes that Christians are not idolaters. The legal liabilities the Talmud placed upon gentiles therefore do not apply to medieval Christians (Novak, pp. 53–54), the exact opposite of Maimonides' view. Whenever the Torah mentions *your brother*, ha-Meiri wrote, it refers to *all* those who believe in God, including Christians.

Finally, along these same lines, Rabbi Moses Rivkes, a seventeenth-century Lithuanian Talmudist, wrote:

> The rabbis of the Talmud meant by the term "idolaters" the pagans who lived in their time, who worshipped the stars and the planets and did not believe in the Exodus from Egypt and in the creation of the world out of nothing. But the nations under whose benevolent shadow we, the Jewish nation, are exiled and are dispersed among them, they do believe in the creation of the world out of nothing and the Exodus from Egypt and in the essentials of the Faith, and their whole intention is toward the Maker of heaven and earth, as other authorities have said . . . the nations do believe all of this (Novak, p. 49).

So we see the extent to which, living under Christian domination and in close contact with Christianity, Jews came to see Christianity as a separate, but legitimate, religion, the followers of which were appropriate partners in business and other economic dealings.

The evidence from the medieval sources illustrates the complexity of attempting to delineate the Jewish view of Christianity. Within the polemical treatises, the debate literature, and the Rabbinic commentaries, we find many negative assessments of Christian biblical interpretation, doctrine, and practice. On the other hand, in the responsa literature and the medieval talmudic commentaries we find texts that distinguish medieval Christians from idolaters. While

the medieval rabbis agreed that the Christians had misinterpreted the Hebrew Bible, the mere fact that they had accepted it as divinely revealed distinguished them from the idol worshippers referred to in the Talmud. Depending on the context in which the rabbi wrote, this could or could not be an important datum to consider when talking about Christianity.

Jewish Attitudes Towards Non-Jews in Modern Times

The Enlightenment forever changed the world in which the Jews lived. From the end of the eighteenth century to the end of the nineteenth century western European Jews moved inch by inch toward the centers of modern Western society. In theory, at least, the Jews could become fully participating citizens of enlightened countries. Political and social theorists put forth numerous arguments for granting the Jews citizenship and more or less equal access to the educational, political, economic, and social institutions of the day. The western European Jews, especially those in Germany, believed that they were on the verge of having the same rights and privileges as their Christian neighbors. Some liberal rabbis wrote as if they were living in the messianic age or at least close to its advent.

These changes in the social, political, and economic spheres went hand in hand with changes in intellectual paradigms. Experimentation replaced theology as the primary means of gaining secure knowledge about the world, its workings, and its inhabitants. Even as science was daily demonstrating the complexity of the world, people such as Newton and Galileo were ascertaining "laws" that explained natural phenomena. The eternal varities that the human mind and the divine mind had previously held in common no longer were the source of all knowledge nor an adequate explanation of the human situation and condition. Reason and analysis based on sense perception along with experimentation replaced religious truths and revelation as the source of knowledge and understanding. Pascal (1623–1662) had explained the human condition in terms of the fall of Adam and Eve. Rousseau (1844–1910) explained it through a theory of the social contract.

This new thought carried over into a new understanding of religion. No longer would religious doctrine be self-validating. Reason, not revelation, rather, would provide an adequate source of knowledge of the Deity and the nature of a valid religion. Only those religious claims that could be verified through rational inquiry were to be important. And because reason was universal to humankind, rational natural religion was the same for all peoples. Many Jewish and Christian theologians agreed on what should constitute a rational religion, so that some viewed Judaism, Christianity, and Islam as equally valid. Religious coercion has no justification, and a valid religion's feelings of superiority are self-contradictory. The only way that one can determine whether or not a particular religion is a true expression of the divine is by assessing the morality and rationality of its believers. A true religion must produce moral followers.[19]

While the particularities of the various religious systems cannot be rationally established, many believed that one could argue on the basis of rational analysis that certain religious propositions are true. A theory of natural religion was developed, which held that one could rationally demonstrate the God exits, that God is benevolent, and that human beings have immortal souls. A system that has these three elements and that produces moral followers thus would be deemed a valid religion and would deserve the respect of all humankind. For this reason, enlightened Jews came to view the religious claims of Judaism and Christianity as valid to the extent, and only to the extent, that those claims were rational and resulted in proper human action.

Educated in languages, math, philosophy, and poetry, Moses Mendelssohn (1729–1786) embodied the traits of the enlightenment and hence was viewed by gentiles with both respect and amazement. No Jew before him had achieved equal status as a philosopher and arbiter of cultural values. While Mendelssohn had no personal desire publicly to defend Judaism or to evaluate Christianity, in 1769 the noted Swiss theologian Johann

Caspar Lavater challenged him to refute the "obvious" truth of Christianity or to do what any rational person would do, convert to the religion whose truth he could not deny. Unable to ignore this public challenge Mendelssohn was forced to respond. In doing so, he judged Christianity on the same terms on which he judged Judaism: a "true" religion had to be rational and to lead its followers to live moral and ethical lives.

In carrying out his analysis Mendelssohn, argued that, to meet the standards of a "true" religion, Christianity needed to eliminate its irrational dogma, for instance, that Jesus rejected Mosaic law. If this were done, then, he argued, even Jews could accept Jesus as a "prophet and messenger of God," sent "to preach the holy doctrine of virtue and its rewards in another life to a depraved human race" (Meyer, 36). But this was not the Christianity that Mendelssohn knew. Rather, it held that Jesus abrogated the law, and it depended on stories of Jesus' miracles. While such stories, as well as a reliance on revelation, in fact occur in every religion, Mendelssohn argued that these things do not establish a religion's truth. Otherwise we would have only "testimonies against testimonies," and no reasonable or rational arguments could verify the contradictory claims. In the end, therefore, based upon an evaluation of Christianity's theology and beliefs, Mendelssohn judged it to be inferior to Judaism. Judaism—with the exception of the ritual law—was a purely rational and true religion, while Christianity rested on a dogma that could not withstand rational evaluation.

Although Mendelssohn believed that Judaism had a stronger claim to being a rational religion than did Christianity, he still argued that the latter religion was appropriate to its own followers. It was irrational, he felt, for any religion to claim that salvation was limited only to its own adherents, a small segment of humanity. Rather, each group—including Christians—would gain salvation through its own ethics and religion. Each rational religion was unique, but each one was an equally acceptable path by which its own followers could achieve salvation.[20]

Following Mendelssohn's lead, a range of new attitudes towards Christianity began to emerge among Jewish thinkers, most of them intent upon finding a point of rapprochement between the two previously antagonistic faiths. Thus, Jews began to emphasize Christianity's essential Jewishness. By identifying Christianity's Jewish roots, Jews could relate to some of its practices and beliefs, even as they rejected elements that challenged the legitimacy of Judaism. A leader of German Reform Judaism, Abraham Geiger (1810–184), for instance, subordinated Christianity to Judaism by placing both Jesus and Christianity within the context of classical Rabbinic Judaism. He argued that Jesus was a Pharisee with strong Galilean roots, a man of deep inner conviction and spirituality. Like many other Jews of his time, Jesus thought he was the Messiah, but his lack of originality prevented him from forming a new religion. Only Paul successfully developed Jesus' messianic claims so as to create a new faith. In this way, Geiger was able to acknowledge Jesus as an important religious figure within first century Judaism, while rejecting Christianity and its messianic claims about Jesus.

Geiger found Christianity's strength to be its struggle to overcome people's natural instincts and to unite humankind. Its shortcomings were its vision of a new world order that left no room for the old world, so that it had to reject everything that preceded it. Christianity strove to stand above humankind and demanded an exclusive loyalty from all of its followers. Because Christianity believes that the final page of human history was written almost two thousand years ago, no real progress in human life is possible without the messianic age. Because Christianity fails to recognize Judaism's self-sufficiency and the fact that Christianity itself grew from a particular form of Judaism, it has rejected all of Judaism instead of just the particular legalistic forms that were common in late antiquity and that Geiger himself abandoned (Jacob, pp. 40–47).

Focusing on the Gospel of Matthew, Samuel Hirsch (1815–1889), another German Reform rabbi, described Jesus in the same terms that he would any nineteenth century Reform Jew. Matthew, in Hirsch's view, describes a Jesus who lived his life according to the best ideals of Judaism. All that

Jesus taught was found in the Mosaic teachings and the words of the biblical prophets. John altered Matthew's accurate description and turned Jesus into an abstraction rather than a person. Paul's assessment of the law and Judaism was accurate for the Judaism that he encountered, but he did not fully understand the depth of breadth of Judaism. For Hirsch, Paul's mission was to prepare the gentile world for accepting Jesus' religion, the ethical and prophetic ideals of Judaism as exemplified in the Sermon on the Mount (Jacob, pp. 53–55). In this vein, Salomon Formstecher (1808–1889) even argued that Christianity's mission was to bring the world to Judaism. Christianity enclosed the truths of Judaism in pagan metaphysics, so that it was comprehensible to the pagans and could lead them to Judaism (Jacob, pp. 57–59). Like Geiger, these other Reform rabbis thus were able to separate Jesus' teachings and personality from later Christianity. They held that Jesus taught a form of Judaism not much different from that which they themselves taught. But Paul, the later Gospel writers, and the Church distorted Jesus' message and created a religion at odds with Judaism. What was true and valuable in Jesus' thought were those items he had found in his Jewish religion.

The American Reform rabbinate, which also stressed the rational and ethical side of Judaism, dealt with Christianity in ways similar to its German counterparts. These American rabbis faced a strong missionary movement in America, which had widespread support in many Christian communities. Like their German contemporaries, the American Reform rabbis placed Jesus within the context of Judaism, so as to argue that early Christianity had no unique doctrines. In this way, true Christianity was nothing but Judaism, and only those learned in classical Judaism could speak authoritatively about Christianity.

Isaac Mayer Wise (1818–1900), the founder of American Reform Judaism, rejected the notion that Jesus' martyrdom was necessary for humanity's salvation, claiming instead that the doctrine of vicarious atonement has no basis in the Gospels. Jesus, he held, accepted the title of messiah at Peter's urging, in order to increase popular support for a Jewish revolt against Rome. Then, when Jesus realized that the Romans were about to massacre the Jews gathered in Jerusalem, he voluntarily accepted execution in order to prevent the Roman slaughter of the Jews. The "novel myth" of Jesus' death was designed to impress the pagan mind. The Gospels' descriptions of Jesus' crucifixion are an unhistorical "conglomeration of contradictions and improbabilities."[21]

Wise argues that Christianity's universal religious and ethical elements are independent of Jesus or the Christian story. One thus could be a good Christian and still reject a belief in Jesus or in the truth of the Gospels. Christianity's triumph was its success in spreading its moral doctrine among the pagan nations of the ancient world and medieval Europe. Its Christological doctrines are so irrational that they cannot be accepted by the majority of humankind, nor can they be the basis of a meaningful religiosity (Jacob, pp. 71–81; Berlin, pp. 49–50). Wise, unlike many of his contemporaries, also argued that Paul was a loyal Jew who spread Jesus' doctrines to the gentile world. His universalistic ideas and ideals are to be admired (Berlin, pp. 62–63).

Kaufmann Kohler (1843–1926) described Jesus as an Essene wonder worker, deeply embedded in the eschatological and apocalyptic Jewish doctrines of the first century. Because he believed that the end of the world was near, Jesus preached the value of poverty, chastity, asceticism, passivity in the face of evil, and opposition to the priesthood (Berlin, p. 50). Paul, a Hellenistic Jew, was influenced by gnosticism and the Hermes literature. His mission was to bring the gentiles to the higher ethical standards of Judaism. While he succeeded in doing this, he failed to achieve universal success, because he divided the world between Christians and Jews instead of between Jews and gentiles (Berlin, p. 61).

In all, we see that the leaders of nineteenth century German and American Reform Judaism interpreted early Christianity as a form of modern Reform Judaism. In this way they could acknowledge Jesus, and perhaps even Paul, to be important religious

leaders and argue for a harmonious relationship between Jews and Christians. If modern Christians would divest themselves of the late antique and medieval distortions of the original message of Jesus in the same way that Reform Jews had rejected the talmudic and medieval distortions of the original biblical and prophetic teachings, the two religions, projecting similar messages, could dwell in harmony.

Franz Rosenzweig (1886–1929), one of the most original Jewish thinkers of the early part of the twentieth century, had a cousin and close friend who converted to Christianity; he himself was on the verge of conversion when he returned to Judaism after a *Kol Nidre* service, on the eve of the Day of Atonement. In the context of this personal experience, he came to see all religions as having some validity, but with Judaism and Christianity standing apart from the rest. Both of them, in his view, has a central place in God's plan for the world.

Rosenzweig altered the terms of the Jewish analysis of Christianity, arguing that philosophy and true religion are phenomenologically the same, both comprising dialogues. However, the content of these dialogues are different. Because of this, Rosenzweig maintains that both Christianity and Judaism are necessary in the world and that each has a role to play in bringing humanity closer to God. But despite their similar functions, Judaism and Christianity are essentially different. Unlike the thinkers discussed above, Rosenzweig does not try to amalgamate Judaism and Christianity. He insists instead that each maintains its distinctiveness, for only in that way can he find a reason for both of them to exist.

Rosenzweig believed that every person had the potential to confront the Divine, which for him meant to enter into a dialogue with God. While only the biblical faiths, Judaism and Christianity, expressed the truth of the relationship between God and humanity, valid revelatory experiences could also occur in non-biblical contexts, the result of a primordial connection between humanity and God. This primal relationship is apparent in God's question to Adam, Gen. 3:9, "Where are you?," to which human beings must render an answer. Any person can answer that question, and in that answer each one defines himself or herself as religious, atheistic, agnostic, or pantheistic.[22]

Insofar as the relationship between God and human beings was natural and primordial, Rosenzweig argued that it could be expressed in diverse modes, all of them authentic. This means that the content of revelation is as important as the experience. Authentic revelation, that is, does not end merely in ecstasy, enlightenment, knowledge, or dogma. The essence of true revelation is the awareness that God is near and that God commands. The proper human response to that revelation is to recognize God's presence and to fulfill God's commandment, a commandment to love. There must be a human response to what God has revealed, a response that creates a dialogue (Miller, p. 66). And this dialogue, according to Rosenzweig, is the same as that which comprises philosophy, in which the participants do not know ahead of time what the other or even themselves will say. Indeed, it is in the dialogue of revelation that Rosenzweig find the perfect example of his own new philosophy (Miller, pp. 58–59).

The dialogue-model explains how there can be more than one authentic expression of the revealed truth. If revelation contained only propositions, there could be only one system that contained the truth (Miller, p. 83). But if revelation is a dialogue that depends on both human and divine actions, there can be several authentic modes of expression.

Rosenzweig argued that Judaism and Christianity are both necessary for humankind, because neither contains the whole truth, which is only with God. Only at the end of time when Judaism and Christianity have each fulfilled its mission will they both become irrelevant. Rosenzweig constructs the image of the sun and its rays in order to show the relationship between Judaism and Christianity. Judaism is self-absorbed, like the burning core of the sun. Christianity goes out into the world, like the sun's rays. Primacy belongs to Judaism, but its message cannot be disseminated without Christianity (Novak, pp. 100–101).

In order to explain why Christianity, but not Judaism, must seek converts, Rosenzweig compares Judaism to the infinity of a point that "only consists of that fact that it is never erased; thus it preserves itself in the eternal self-preservation of procreative blood." Judaism's essence makes it possible for it to sustain itself without bringing in people from the outside. A point is always the same; it does not need to be added to in order to maintain itself. Christianity, on the other hand, is similar to the infinity of a line that "consists of the very possibility of unrestricted extension." To reach infinity, Christianity must seek converts, just as a line can extend itself only by being added to. In this way, Rosenzweig justifies Christianity's attempt to convert non-Christians, even though this is an aspect of Christianity that most Jews find objectionable (Novak, p. 102).

A crucial difference between Judaism and Christianity is that Judaism's eternal nature and uniqueness lie in its direct relationship to God. Christianity is correct when it claims that no Christian can reach the Father except through the Son. This is not true for Jews, who do not need the Church or the Son because they have already reached God. The rest of humankind, however, does not have this direct contact with God and so require the mediating power of Christianity: "Any and every Jew feels in the depth of his soul that the Christian relation to God . . . is particularly and extremely poverty-stricken and ceremonious; namely, that as Christians one has to claim from someone else, whoever he may be, to call God 'our Father'" (Novak, p. 104). Miller (p. 95) summarizes Rosenzweig's view as follows:

> The Christocentric character of Christianity, which is essential to it, renders it incapable of being simultaneously theocentric. Thus, from the viewpoint of Judaism, it remains in some sense godless. On the other hand, the love of God manifested in Christ is so vibrantly incarnate for Christianity that Judaism seems by comparison loveless.

Judaism views God and God's kingdom as essentially and ultimately real. Christianity considers Christ and the interim kingdom, that break in the eternal course of history that occurred at Jesus' birth, as essentially real. Because Judaism does not accept a break in the eternal thread of history from creation to the end of time (Miller, p. 95), the two faiths are irreconcilably different. They have two completely different foci (Miller, p. 108). Despite this fact, the Jews' existence and their maintaining a direct connection to God prevents Christian expansion from degenerating into paganism. This is what would occur if that expansion were for its own sake and not for the sake of God. Without Judaism, the sun, Christianity, the rays of the sun, would not continue to shine.

In addition, Christianity faces three potential problems, and the continued existence of Judaism prevents these problems from becoming realities. Left unchecked 1) the Spirit could lead in any direction and not necessarily to God; 2) the Son of Man could become the Truth instead of God; 3) God would become All-in-All not the One above all (Novak, p. 105). Judaism and its direct, unmediated relationship to God thus puts the divine in its proper perspective for all humankind, including Christians.

Just as Judaism is necessary for Christianity, so the former needs the latter in order to fulfill its mission on earth. Christianity permits all of the nations to be included in the revealed relationship with God. If Judaism were in this way to focus its concern on the rest of the nations of the world, it would lose the unique intensity of its special relationship to God. Judaism must accept the importance of Christianity's universalistic mission, undertaken for the sake of final redemption of humanity (Novak, p. 109).

Rosenzweig argued that Judaism and Christianity were necessary and complementary religions. Each was distinct but each needed the other in order to be able to fulfill its mission. Rosenzweig's contemporary and collaborator Martin Buber (1878–1965) took a different stand. Like Rosenzweig, Buber recognized the differences between Christianity and Judaism. But unlike his colleague, Buber followed the tact of viewing true Christianity as a kind of authentic Judaism. The Jewishness Buber wanted to find in Jesus was the same

Jewishness he sought to discover in Judaism. For Buber, Jesus was an authentic Jew who experienced and taught about the proper relationship to God (Novak, p. 81):

> From my youth onwards I have found in Jesus my great brother. That Christianity has regarded and does regard him as God and Savior has always appeared to me a fact of the highest importance which, for his sake and my own, I must endeavor to understand. I am more than certain that a great place belongs to him in Israel's history of faith and that this place cannot be described by any of the usual categories.

Buber believed that Jesus experienced God spontaneously and spiritually; he did not reach God through the legalism of either Paul or the rabbis. Buber finds the real Jesus in Matthew's Sermon on the Mount (Novak, p. 84). The Christian dogma of Christ is a later development constructed by Paul and the Church, and this forms as much of a barrier to an intimate relationship between humans and the divine as does the dogma of legalistic Judaism (Novak, p. 85).

Also like Rosenzweig, Buber believed in the possibility that each religion has an authentic revelation that is valid for those who believe in the system. Thus, he justifies his perspective that religions are matters of personal choice and that all peoples' beliefs are equally valid. The conflicts among religious persons result from the fact that only those within the faith community can appreciate a given religion and find its core. The Christianity of the Sermon on the Mount, for instance, is an authentic path to God. The Jews ability to acknowledge this path is, however, contravened by Christology's demands that Jews accept that a radical change occurred in the world with Jesus birth, life, and death. This Jews cannot accept (Jacob, pp. 173–174):

> We know that the history of the world has not yet been shattered to its very core, that the world is not yet redeemed. We feel the lack of redemption of the world. We do not perceive a caesura in the course of history. We acknowledge no mid-point in it, but only a goal. The goal of the way of God who does not pause upon his way.

Buber believed that Judaism and Christianity were each authentic and unique; however, "the mystery of the other one is internal . . . and cannot be perceived from without" (Jacob, p. 174). It is God's mystery that both faiths exist side by side: "We should acknowledge our fundamental difference and impart to each other with unreserved confidence our knowledge of the unity of this house, a unity which we hope will one day surround us without divisions. We will seve, until the day when we may be united in common service" (Jacob, p. 174).

Buber's view of Christianity was not as philosophically consistent as Rosenzweig's. Buber found a common ground between Judaism and Christianity in the spirituality he saw as shared by Jesus' message and that of prophetic Judaism. Unfortunately, he thought, that commonality was destroyed by Paul and the Church on one side and by Rabbinic legalism on the other. While each religion has its place in the present world, their distinctiveness has prevented Jews and Christians today from working together.

Jewish Perceptions of Christianity After the Holocaust

The events of the twentieth century dramatically changed the relationship between Jews and Christians. The Holocaust forever altered the way in which Jews of the second half of this century would view non-Jews. While Christianity did not cause the Holocaust, many of its myths and images supported European anti-Judaism and justified the Nazis' murder of Europe's Jews. There were many Christians and Church leaders who endangered themselves in order to protect Jews. But many more supported and executed the Nazis' plans, and many did so in the name of Jesus and Christianity. While the Nazis also killed many Christians, many, even most, of the murderers of the Jews were baptized followers of Christ. Contemporary Christians struggle with this truth, as do current Jewish thinkers.

Two other events have proven important for Jews attempting to comprehend the relationship between Judaism and Christianity. The creation of the State of Israel in 1948 challenged medieval and modern Christian doctrine concerning the superiority of

Christianity and the divine rejection of Jews and Judaism. From the Jewish point of view, the failure of the Vatican, the World Council of Churches, and other international Christian organizations to support Israel in the Six Day War was also significant. This disproved the previous Jewish assumption that, in the aftermath of the Holocaust, Christians would feel compelled to assist Jews who were again threatened with extinction.

The complexity of the post-Holocaust Jewish view of Christianity can be seen through a brief review of the ideas expressed by Eliezer Berkovits, an orthodox rabbi, Richard L. Rubenstein, a conservative rabbi who is a university professor and theologian, and Emil L. Fackenheim, a professor of philosophy and survivor of Sachsenhausen. As we shall see, while all three see a connection between Christianity and the Nazi ideology that created the Holocaust, they differ regarding the implications of that connection.

These thinkers' understanding of the relationship between the historical attitude of Christians towards Jews and the Holocaust is as follows. Berkovits[23] focuses on the previous centuries of Christian anti-Jewish teachings (pp. 18–26): "Without the contempt and hatred for the Jews planted by Christianity in the hearts of the multitude of its followers, Nazism's crime against the Jewish people could never have been conceived, much less executed" (p. 42). Rubenstein[24] holds that a Christian invention, the "mythological Jew," provided the images and the models for the Nazis. This was the Jew viewed not like other humans, but as either Jesus or Judas, as the divine or the paradigmatic betrayers. In this regard, medieval descriptions of the Jews as the devil's surrogates, God-killers, provided a fertile ground for Nazi propaganda (p. 21). Fackenheim,[25] finally, sees a close connection between Nazi anti-semitism and the religious and social doctrines of Christian (pp. 54–55).

Christianity's ancient and medieval images of the Jews thus are understood to have provided the Nazis with the raw material upon which to ground their war against the Jews. Further, the failure of the largely Christian West, let alone the Vatican, to respond to the Nazi onslaught becomes significant for the Jewish view of modern Christianity. Focusing upon Christianity's failure to act, Berkovits argues that that religion has entirely lost its moral underpinning, that the Vatican and the other churches have "lost all claim to moral and spiritual leadership in the world" (p. 16). Fackenheim holds a similar view, noting in particular that the same anti-Semitism that permitted many Christians to accept the Nazi slaughter of the Jews still finds expression today in Christians' reading of the Holocaust as a universal evil not particular to the Jews at all. Fackenheim goes so far as to deem to be an aspect of anti-semitism what he views as Christians' failure to be even-handed in judging the competing claims of Israelis and Arabs (Fackenheim, p. 56):

> Why did the Christian press remain undisturbed by nineteen years of Jordanian control of the Christian holy places (and desecration of Jewish cemeteries and synagogues), but become greatly agitated by Israeli control? Why does it fill its pages with accounts of the plight of Arab refugees but rarely even mention the nearly as numerous Jewish refugees from Arab countries? Why are there moral equations between Israel's claims to the right to exist and Arab claims to the right to destroy her?

In the end, all three see little chance of a real Jewish-Christian dialogue unless Christianity rethinks its traditional images of the Jews. Berkovits maintains that the only reason Christianity is willing even to think about engaging in ecumenical discussions is its loss of worldly power. Rubenstein has written that "unless Israel is the vessel of God's revelation to humanity, it is difficult to proclaim Christ as the fulfillment and climax of that revelation. . . . I see no way believing Christians can demythologize Israel's special relation to God without radically altering the meaning of Christian faith" (p. 21). This means that Christianity cannot imagine the Jew as a normal human being (p. 56).

In the wake of the Holocaust, Jewish theologians have challenged Christian thinkers to rework Christianity's traditional pictures of the Jews, which played a role in the Nazi onslaught and which prevented and still prevent many Christians from responding positively to Jews in dire straits. Until this

occurs, many contemporary Jewish thinkers believe it will be impossible for contemporary Jews and Christians to view one another as caring human beings and to respond to one another in appropriate ways.

Conclusions

At its core, Judaism is a self-contained religious system that has little concern for the non-Jew. Judaism's principle effort has been to define clearly the ways in which Jews can fulfill the terms of the covenant entered into between God and the Jewish People at Sinai. To the extent that Jews, in contact with large non-Jewish populations, have needed to make sense of the "other," their views have changed according to the specific needs defined by the intellectual, cultural, political, economic, and social environments of each age. As a result, it is largely impossible to speak of *the* Jewish attitude towards the non-Jew. Still, we can draw several general conclusions.

The most important point is that, through history, the Jewish definition of the non-Jew has been an aspect of Jewish self-definition and the legitimization of Judaism. Through their image of the "other," Jews, like other peoples, have defined what it means to be a member of their particular group. Second, Jewish attitudes towards non-Jews have changed from age to age depending upon the actual nature of the contact between Jew and gentile and in light of the particular social and economic needs of the time. Jewish thinking about the non-Jew thus has for the most part not been a primarily theological enterprise. It is, rather, the outcome of the real life experiences of Jews living as a minority within non-Jewish cultures and nations.

Because Christianity depends upon the Jewish scriptures, the Jewish deity, and the Jewish mythological view of itself, it has presented a major challenge to Jewish thinkers. While other religions of late antiquity were obviously different from Judaism, and so could largely be ignored, Christianity appeared to be and claimed to be *very* similar. Throughout history, the two religions thus have sought at both theoretical and practical levels clearly to distinguish between themselves. The result is that Jewish views of Christianity have been multi-faceted and complex, emerging from the particular historical contexts in which they served to make sense of Jewish experience. This being the case, projecting the future course of Jewish understanding of the non-Jew appears futile, as impossible as accurately foreseeing the course of human events in general.

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Notes

[1] On this, see, for example, Gary G. Porton, *Goyim: Gentiles and Israelites in Mishnah-Tosefta* (Atlanta, 1988).

[2] The morning prayers state: "Blessed are you, YHWH, sovereign of the universe, former of light and creator of darkness, maker of peace and creator of all. Who, in his mercy, gives light to the earth and to those who dwell on it. And in his goodness, daily renews creation. . . ."

[3] William S. Green, "Otherness Within: Toward a Theory of Difference in Rabbinic Judaism," in Jacob Neusner and Ernest S. Frerichs, *"To See Ourselves as Others See Us:" Christians, Jews, "Others" in Late Antiquity* (Chico, 1985), pp. 49–70.

[4] See the discussions in Sacha Stern, *Jewish Identity in Early Rabbinic Writings* (Leiden, 1994).

[5] For a partial bibliography of ethnicity, see those items listed in Porton.

[6] David Novak, *The Image of the Non-Jew in Judaism* (New York, 1983).

[7] Jacob Neusner, *Judaism and Its Social Metaphors* (Cambridge, 1989), pp. 88–89.

[8] See the careful discussion of these issues in Neusner, pp. 97–106, 145–163. See also Marcel Simon, *Verus Israel: A Study of the Relations between Christians and Jews in the Roman Empire (135–425)* (London, 1986), pp. 187–193.

[9] While many have understood the Rabbinic discussions of the *minim*—a term designating Jewish sectarians—to be directed specifically towards Christians (Simon, pp. 197–199), this seems to be an oversimplification. While Christians, or at least the Jewish followers of Jesus, were probably included in the designation *minim*, the category is much broader and includes many other Jewish dissidents and heretics. Recent scholarship has demonstrated that the rabbis' concern with the *minim* is no indication of their specific interest in Christianity. See Reuven Kimelman, "*Birkat Ha-Minim* and the Lack of Evidence for an Anti-Christian Jewish Prayer in Late Antiquity," in E.P. Sanders, A.I. Baumgartern, and Alan Mendelson, *Jewish and Christian Self-Definition: Volume Two. Aspects of Judaism in the Graeco-Roman Period* (Philadelphia, 1981), pp. 226–244.

[10] Claudia Seltzer, *Jewish Responses to Early Christians: History and Polemics 30–150 C.E.* (Minneapolis, 1994), pp. 21–22.

[11] Jack T. Sanders, *Schismatics, Sectarians, Dissidents, Deviants: The First One Hundred Years of Jewish-Christian Relations* (Valley Forge, 1993), p. 81.

[12] On the Rabbinic controversy concerning the circumcision of converts see Gary G. Porton, *The Stranger Within Your Gates: Converts and Conversion in Rabbinic Literature* (Chicago, 1994), pp. 139–148.

[13] Mark R. Cohen, *Under Crescent and Cross: The Jews in the Middle Ages* (Princeton, 1994), p. 34.

[14] M. Avi-Yonah, *The Jews of Palestine: A Political History from the Bar Kokhba War to the Arab Conquest* (New York, 1976), pp. 213–220, 246–251.

[15] H.H. Ben-Sasson, *A History of the Jewish People* (Cambridge, 1976), pp. 413–420.

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P

Pagan Historians on Judaism in Ancient Times

The expansion of Greek civilization to the east, especially from the time of Alexander the Great onward, involved contact with many ethnic groups, following many religions. Judaism, with its monotheism and prohibition of graven images, was unique among these religions and presented difficulties for followers of Greek, and later Roman, polytheism. The Jews worshipped a God whom they would neither identify with a Greco-Roman god (syncretism) nor allow to be worshipped together with such a god. Historians, writing in Greek and Latin, coped with these difficulties by attempting to view the rites and beliefs of Judaism through the framework of their own sets of beliefs, often misunderstanding aspects of Judaism, mistakenly identifying Jewish rites and beliefs with those of their own polytheistic culture, and, in some cases, fearfully regarding Judaism's monotheistic exclusiveness as a menace to their culture.

The historians described here were followers of polytheistic Greek, Hellenistic, or Roman belief systems; Christians fall outside our scope, their attitudes toward Judaism being substantially different from those of pagans. All the historians discussed here lived before Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire in the fourth century C.E. We look in particular at authors of material, arranged chronologically, dealing with political and social developments. Varro (first century B.C.E.), although generally regarded as an antiquarian, is here treated as an historian because some of his writings are historical in nature. Plutarch and Suetonius (first-second centuries C.E.) are here considered historians because their biographical works are major historical sources. Strabo, roughly contemporary, was an historian as well as a geographer.

Only historians whose extant writings concern Judaism, *the religion*, as opposed to the politics, ethnicity, and secular culture of the Jews, are dealt with here; thus Hieronymus of Cardia, active about 300 B.C.E., is excluded. Less important historians, including historians who make only brief and occasional references to Judaism, as well as historians who are known only by name, cited in the writings of other authors, are also excluded. These excluded historians, from whom material survives, listed chronologically, are Herodotus, Pseudo-Hellenicus, Agatharcides, Polybius, Laetius, Asinius Pollio, Castor of Rhodes, Hypsicrates, Timagenes, Nicolaus of Damascus, Ptolemy, Livy, Valerius Maximus, Ptolemy of Mendes, Chaeremon, Damocritus, Suetonius, Florus, Herennius Philo, Appian, Cassius Dio, Ammianus Marcellinus, and the author or authors of the *Historia Augusta*.

General Considerations

Despite the large Jewish population in the Hellenistic-Roman Mediterranean world, extant pagan Greek and Roman writers say relatively little about the Jews. Much, of course, has not survived, and much of what survives is extant only in citations in the works of other writers; these may not always be accurate.[1] Thirty-four pagan historians, of whom twelve are discussed here, ranging chronologically from the fifth century B.C.E. to the second century C.E., discuss

some aspect of Judaism. A few make only passing references, e.g., to the Temple of Jerusalem or to circumcision; others go into considerable detail. Topics discussed include Moses and the Exodus (e.g., Hecataeus, Manetho, Diodorus Siculus, Strabo, Apion, Tacitus), monotheism (notably Varro and Plutarch), the Sabbath (Strabo, Apion, Tacitus, Plutarch), dietary laws (notably Plutarch and Tacitus; little is said of anything other than the prohibition of pork), and circumcision (notably Hecataeus, Strabo, and Apion). Although many pagan historians discuss the Jerusalem Temple, they do not discuss synagogue services or sectarian divisions within Judaism. It is doubtful whether any of them, except perhaps Nicolaus of Damascus, the confidant of Herod the Great, not discussed in this article since his great knowledge of Jewish matters makes him atypical, had any knowledge of Hebrew or the Septuagint.

Varying Assessments of Judaism

Much modern scholarship has focused on pagan writers' praise or criticism of Judaism and on the question of antisemitism in antiquity. The most recent study is Peter Schäfer, *Judeophobia: Attitudes toward the Jews in the Ancient World* (Cambridge, 1997). This scholar, like many of his predecessors, considers the preponderance of references to Judaism among ancient pagan writers to be negative. But Louis H. Feldman[2] argues otherwise, ascribing negative attitudes to Judaism to "the refusal of Jews to engage in meaningful dialogue with other religious groups on a plane of equality," which antagonized pagan intellectuals. Schäfer, by contrast, sees these intellectuals as feeling threatened by Jewish "separateness." Indeed, many pagan authors, from Hecataeus (third century B.C.E.) to authors living under the Roman Empire, accused Jews of hatred of foreigners or even of the whole human race and specifically of ass-worship (e.g., Apion, Tacitus) and human sacrifice (Apion). Still, such writers as Plutarch and Varro praised Judaism for its monotheism and prohibition of graven images, so that the overall situation may be more varied than either scholar admits.

Hecataeus of Abdera

This Greek philosopher and historian, the first to mention the Jews by name, lived in the time of Alexander the Great and Ptolemy I, the first Hellenistic king of Egypt (ca. 300 B.C.E.). His writings survive only in quotations in the works of later writers, according to whom he wrote a work on the history of Egypt, probably entitled *Aegyptiaca.* According to Flavius Josephus, he also wrote a book *On the Jews* (*Against Apion* I, 183) and another on Abraham (*Jewish Antiquities* I, 159). The existence of the former book is also mentioned by the third-century Christian writer Origen (*Against Celsus* I, 15), who, however, states that its authenticity was questioned by the pagan Greek historian Herennius Philo of Byblus (in Phoenicia), who was active at the beginning of the second century C.E.

Most modern scholars consider the book on Abraham to have been a Jewish forgery, and many doubt that the work *On the Jews* was written by Hecataeus (Stern, vol. I, pp. 20–25; Feldman, *Jew and Gentile*, p. 8). The passage from *Aegyptiaca*, cited in the later Greek writer Diodorus Siculus' *Historical Library* XL, 3,[3] includes the first Greek account of the Exodus, which states that certain strangers living in Egypt and practicing different religious rites were expelled during a pestilence ascribed to divine punishment for neglect of the traditional, polytheistic, Egyptian religion. Some of the exiles landed in Greece, becoming ancestors of many Greek groups; most went to Judea. The latter group was led by a man called Moses, outstanding both for wisdom and courage. He founded Jerusalem, built the Temple, made rules for Jewish ritual and worship, and established the twelve tribes, the number twelve being "perfect" and equal to the number of months. Moses had no images of the gods made, thinking that God is not in human form but that the heaven that surrounds the earth is itself divine and rules the universe. Moses established sacrifices differing from those of other nations; the Jewish way of living also differs, since Moses, as a result of the expulsion from Egypt, introduced an "antisocial" or "inhuman" (*apanthropon*, literally, "far from human beings")

and "xenophobic" or "intolerant" (*misoxenon*, literally, "hostile to strangers" or "foreigners") way of life.

The passage goes on to say that Moses picked out the most refined and able men, appointing them priests and judges and making them guardians of the laws and customs. For this reason, the Jews never have a king, authority being vested in the high priest. They submit with alacrity to the high priest's decrees, made in the name of Moses. Various praiseworthy ethical requirements, introduced by Moses, are then mentioned, ending with the requirement that Jews rear their children (rather than commit infanticide), as a result of which they are a populous nation.

Hecataeus, as cited by Diodorus, ends by stating that Jews' marriage and burial customs differ from those of other nations, but that later, when under foreign (Persian and Macedonian) rule, many of these customs were overturned due to mingling with other nations. This passage is predominantly sympathetic to the Jews and may have been derived from a Jewish source. Jews are praised by being coupled with two early Greek heroes. The statement about monotheism and graven images praises these concepts in accordance with Greek philosophical ideas. Moses is depicted in terms appropriate to the founder of a Greek city. A number of inaccurate statements, ascribing later developments such as the foundation of Jerusalem and the Temple and high priesthood to Moses as well as inaccuracies about the development of the twelve tribes and the nonexistence of kingship among the Jews, show ignorance of Jewish history before the Persian period. Despite the generally positive tone of the passage, certain themes unfavorable to the Jews appear. These will be repeated, often with variations, by many later writers.

Hecataeus' version of the Exodus story connects the Jews, at least indirectly, with irreligion and pestilence, while for the first time the theme of Jewish *misoxenia*, common in later hostile accounts of the Jews, appears. Scholars have debated the significance of the tension between positive and negative attitudes toward Judaism. Schäfer, p. 17, ascribes the *misoxenia* theme to Hecataeus, adding to existing Egyptian anti-Jewish traditions, perhaps increased by the tension between the Egyptian and Jewish communities in Alexandria, which broke out into violence many times from the period of the early Ptolemies through the first century C.E. Stern, vol. 1, pp. 21–22 and 29–34, emphasizes the philo-semitic aspects of the passage. In antiquity, the reputation of Moses as a magician and wise man extended far beyond Jewish circles, and the lesser but similar reputation of Abraham must be mentioned in connection with Hecataeus and later Greek and Roman historians.

The citation from Hecataeus' doubtful work *On the Jews* in Josephus' *Against Apion* I, 183–204, is of questionable authenticity.[4] Hecataeus (or Pseudo-Hecataeus) discusses the Jewish high priesthood in early Hellenistic times, notes Jewish devotion to the laws of Judaism, describes Jerusalem and the Temple, which he inaccurately locates in the center of the city, and notes that it houses an eternal light but no statue or votive offering or sacred grove (as might be found in Greek temple enclosures). Here priests constantly perform acts of purification, abstaining from wine. The author goes on to say, according to Josephus, that he had seen a Jew deriding the pagan practice of taking omens from the flight of birds.

Manetho

The Egyptian priest Manetho wrote a Greek history of his country in the third century B.C.E. This work was a major source of information on Egypt for Greeks and Romans, so remaining until the deciphering of hieroglyphics in modern times. It survives only in citations in Josephus' *Against Apion*, in which all the extant references to Judaism appear, and in the writings of certain Christian authors. In *Against Apion* I, 73–91, Manetho discusses the invasion of Egypt by the Hyksos from Asia, dated by modern scholars to the seventeenth century B.C.E. He notes their cruelty and destruction of Egyptian temples and says they were defeated by the Egyptians, fleeing to Judea and founding Jerusalem. Although Jews are not mentioned by name, this is an Egyptian version of the Exodus story.

A second version of the Exodus story appears in another citation of Manetho in Josephus' *Against Apion* I, 228–252: a seer told the Egyptian king that the king would be able to see the gods if he expelled lepers and other polluted persons. Certain diseased persons, including some Egyptian priests, were cast into stone-quarries; later they were allowed to live in a deserted city formerly inhabited by Hyksos. One Egyptian priest, Osarseph, became their leader, forbidding them from worshipping the gods and commanding them to eat animals Egyptians considered sacred; they were also forbidden to associate with outsiders. Thus the priest made laws completely contrary to those of Egypt. Eventually, despite opposition from the Egyptian king, these polluted persons joined the Hyksos, who had been expelled from Egypt and were living in Jerusalem. Together they invaded Egypt, pillaging temples and unrestrainedly mutilating images of the gods while roasting the sacred animals worshipped by the Egyptians in the sanctuaries, compelling the priests to sacrifice the sacred animals and then throwing the men out naked.

The passage concludes that the priest who framed the constitution and laws was a native of the Egyptian city of Heliopolis, named Osarseph after the god Osiris, worshipped in that city, but when he joined his people, he changed his name to Moses. Not all scholars ascribe this version to Manetho, although many do (see Stern, vol. I, pp. 63–4). Schäfer, pp. 18–20 and 163–166, believes that an earlier Egyptian story about the expulsion of invaders was later combined with an Egyptian version of the Exodus story; Egyptian antisemitism goes back beyond the Hellenistic period to at least that of Persian domination, and the motifs of *misoxenia* and extreme opposition to Egyptian polytheism, with its divine images and sacred animals, are present.

Posidonius

Posidonius of Apamea, a philosopher and historian who lived from about 135 to 51 B.C.E., is said by Josephus (*Against Apion* II, 79–80, 89, 91–96) to have been a major source for a passage in the works of Apion in which the Jews are accused of human sacrifice in the Temple of Jerusalem. Since scholarly opinion generally rejects Posidonius, who apparently was not directly consulted by Josephus, as the source of this passage (see Stern, vol. I, p. 142 and Schäfer, p. 83), the passage will here be discussed in connection with Apion.

Alexander Polyhistor

This Greek historian from Miletus wrote a work *On the Jews* after the Roman general Pompey captured Jerusalem in the first century B.C.E. This work survives only in citations in Eusebius' *Preparation for the Gospel* (IX, 17–39, Stern, no. 51a) and in Clement of Alexandria's *Miscellanies* (I, 21.130.3, Stern, no. 51b). Alexander seems to have derived his information from a number of Jewish writers in Greek. The first of the two passages refers to the sacrifice of Abraham, the exposure of the infant Moses, and the prophecy of Jeremiah, all in summary form. There is a reference to the "holy book (s)," i.e., the Hebrew Scriptures, which Alexander seems to have heard of but not read. The second passage refers briefly to the building of the Jerusalem Temple. Another citation from Alexander Polyhistor, from his work *Concerning Rome*, appears in the entry for Alexander in the *Suda* ("Fortress of Knowledge"), a tenth-century C.E. Byzantine Greek encyclopedia (Stern, no. 52). This unique and bizarre passages states that Alexander wrote that "there lived a Hebrew woman Moso who composed the Law of the Hebrews." No other extant pagan writer says Moses was a woman. This passage has been variously interpreted as a derisory joke, accusing the Jews of effeminacy, a reference to the Roman prophetesses called Sibyls, and an identification of the name Moses with "Muse."[5]

Diodorus Siculus

Diodorus Siculus wrote a *Library of History* in Greek in the first century C.E. This highly unoriginal historian derived much of his

material on Judaism from Hecataeus, whom he cites by name at 40, 3 (Stern, no. 65), which goes on to give the passage on the Exodus story discussed above. Two other passages in the *Library of History* (I, 28. 1–3, Stern, no. 55, and I, 55. 5, Stern, no. 57) mention that the Jewish practice of circumcision is of Egyptian origin. At I, 94.1–2 (Stern, no. 58), Diodorus discusses the divinely-inspired lawgivers of various nations, stating that "among the Jews, Moses referred his laws to the god who is invoked as Iao." This is the first reference to the name Iao in a pagan source, although it appears in Jewish papyri but not in the Septuagint, since the four-letter name for God was regarded as unpronounceable and unwritable. Another passage, 35. 1. 1–5, preserved in the *Library* of Photius (Stern, no. 63), states that when the Seleucid king Antiochus VII Sidetes (reigned 138–129 B.C.E.) besieged Jerusalem, many of the king's friends urged him to capture the city by storm and completely wipe out the nation of Jews, "since they alone of all nations avoided dealings with any other people and looked on all men as their enemies," another example of the recurring theme of Jewish *misoxenia*.

Another theme found in pagan literature appears in the subsequent sentence, where the king's advisors add that the ancestors of the Jews had been expelled from Egypt because they were impious and detested by the gods. People with white or leprous marks on their bodies were driven out, occupied the territory around Jerusalem, made their hatred of humankind into a tradition, and introducing outlandish laws, prohibiting eating with other peoples (a reference to the dietary laws) or showing foreigners any good will at all. The king's friends recalled that when Antiochus IV Epiphanes had captured the Temple (in 168 B.C.E., he found in its innermost sanctuary, where it was lawful for the priest alone to enter, "a marble statue of a heavily bearded man seated on an ass," which Antiochus thought was a statue of Moses, "founder of Jerusalem and organizer of the nation," who was responsible for the Jews' "misanthropic and lawless customs." The king, shocked by such misanthropy, decided to break down the traditional customs of the Jews and thus sacrificed before the image of Moses and the open-air altar of the god a great sow, pouring its blood over them. He then ordered that the holy books containing the xenophobic laws be sprinkled with the broth of the meat, that the eternal lamp in the Temple be put out, and that the high priest and the rest of the Jews be compelled to eat some of the meat. The passage goes on to say that the friends of Antiochus VII Sidetes, after telling this story, urged the king to exterminate the Jews or at least abolish their laws and make them change their ways.

The king, however, was satisfied with taking a tribute and dismantling the walls of Jerusalem. The source of the passage, apparently unaware of or ignoring the Jewish prohibition against graven images and depicting the Temple of Jerusalem as somewhat resembling a Greek temple, has been identified with Posidonius, perhaps through Nicolaus of Damascus as an intermediate source. Elements of Seleucid propaganda against the second Jewish commonwealth have been thought to appear, but at the end of the passage the arguments of the antisemites are rejected by the king. The ass appears as icon in the Temple but is not depicted as an object of worship, unlike in the later account in Apion. Themes of Jewish xenophobia, expulsion from Egypt due to leprosy, and impiety appear, as they did earlier in the writings of Hecataeus and Manetho. Another passage, from Diodorus 40.2 (Stern, no. 64), excerpted in the writings of the tenth-century Byzantine emperor and writer Constantine Porphyrogenitus, states that the Jewish ruler in Maccabean times should strictly speaking be called high priest, not king (in fact the high priests took the title of king in the second century B.C.E.).

Varro

Marcus Terentius Varro (116–27 B.C.E.), "the most learned of the Romans" and a prolific author on many topics, was, strictly speaking, an antiquarian rather than a historian. Since, however, some of his extant writings are substantially historical in nature, he is

included here. Since Varro is the first Latin author to be treated in this article, it is appropriate to mention Schäfer's comparison between Greek (or Greco-Egyptian) and Roman attitudes toward Judaism (pp. 193–195). Many Romans, including Tacitus, express favorable attitudes even in highly unfavorable contexts; the Romans place somewhat greater emphasis on abstinence from pork and the Sabbath; they are, unlike the Greeks, concerned with Jewish proselytism; there is somewhat less intolerance of Jewish monotheism, and the Romans never, in extant sources, accuse the Jews of human sacrifice. But there are many exceptions to these rules, including, to a substantial extent, Varro, who is, with the possible exception of Strabo, the most pro-Jewish of the Latin writers here considered as historians.

The extant passages on Judaism in Varro survive only in citations from later Christian writers. Two passages from Varro's *Human and Divine Antiquities* are cited in the writings of Augustine, the famous writer of the *City of God*, who lived at the beginning of the fifth century C.E. The first, cited in *City of God* IV, 31 (Stern, no. 72a), states that the early, uncorrupted Romans worshipped the gods without an image. In support of this opinion, Varro gives "the testimony of the Jewish nation" and, in a number of places in his writings (see Stern, vol. II, p. 209), expresses opposition to divine statues. In three other passages cited in Augustine's *Concerning the Agreement of the Gospels* (I, 22. 30, Stern, no. 72b; I. 23. 31, Stern, no. 72c; I. 27. 42, Stern, no. 72d), Varro identifies the Jewish God with Jupiter, being, according to Augustine (in the first passage), "terrified by his sublimity." The Jews worship the highest God, and the Romans consider Jupiter to be the king of the gods. Here Varro shows Greek philosophical influence. By his time, the Jews were so widespread in the Roman world that it is probable that Varro had personal contact with them. The sixth-century C.E. Greek author John Lydus states that Varro identified the Jewish God with Iao, as did Diodorus Siculus (Lydus, *Concerning the Months* IV. 53, Stern, no. 75).

Strabo

Strabo of Amasea (64 B.C.E.–ca. 25 C.E.) was both a historian and a geographer, writing in Greek. The material on Judaism in his *History* survives only in quotations in Josephus' writings, but his *Geography* is extant almost in its entirety. Two citations (Stern, nos. 98 and 100), in Josephus' *Against Apion* II, 83–84, and *Jewish Antiquities* XIII, 319 merely ascribe to Strabo statements about the Temple and circumcision that are also, Josephus notes, attested in other authors, such as Polybius, already discussed. A third citation, in *Jewish Antiquities* XIII, 345–347 (Stern, no. 101), ascribes to Strabo the statement of Nicolaus of Damascus about one of the Ptolemaic king's accusing the Jews of cannibalism. Another passage, cited in the same work, XIV, 111–113 (Stern, no. 102) refers in passing to the Jerusalem Temple. At XIV, 66–68 (Stern, no. 104), Josephus ascribes also to Strabo Nicolaus' statement about the Jews' continuing to practice their rites while Pompey's troops were storming into the Temple, mentioning that the city was captured "on the fast day." Whether this refers to Yom Kippur, which cannot possibly be the day the city was captured, since other evidence indicates that the date was much too early in the year, or the Sabbath, which many pagans thought was a fast day, perhaps because of the prohibition against cooking, is a matter of dispute (Stern, vol. I, p. 277). At XIV, 138–139 (Stern, no. 107), Josephus cites a passing allusion by Strabo to the high priesthood.

Three other passages in Strabo's *Geography* contain more substantial material on Judaism. *Geography* 16.2.34–46 (Stern, no. 115) presents a version of the Exodus story completely different from those given by his predecessors among pagan Greek authors and generally more favorable towards Judaism. Strabo notes that the most prevalent of the trustworthy reports in connection with the Temple of Jerusalem says that the ancestors of the present Judeans were Egyptians. Moses, Strabo continues, was an Egyptian priest, holding a part of Lower Egypt, but went to Egypt together with many people

who worshipped the divinity (*theion*), because he was dissatisfied with the Egyptian religion and its graven images of gods in animal and human form. He believed that God encompasses us all as well as land and sea, the thing that we call heaven, universe, or the nature of all that exists. Image-worship is therefore wrong, and a sacred precinct and a worthy sanctuary should worship God without an image. People who have good dreams should sleep in the sanctuary for the sake of the community as well as themselves, and only the self-restrained and righteous should expect some blessing from God.

According to Strabo's account, by saying such things, Moses persuaded some thoughtful men, whom he led to the site of Jerusalem. Instead of using weapons, he put forward as a defense his beliefs and worship, promising to give the people a mode of worship and ritual unburdened with unnecessary expenses, divine obsessions, or other "absurd troubles." Because of his dealings with the people and the prospects he held out, Moses was persuasive and popular, as were his early successors. Later, however, superstitious men were appointed to the priesthood, and then tyrannical ones. From superstition arose abstinence from meat, still their custom, and circumcision and excision (of females) and other such observances. From tyrannies arose bands of robbers, but the people still respected their acropolis, i.e., Jerusalem, honoring it as a holy place, which is natural for people who respect their common traditions. Strabo then goes on to discuss the ancient traditions and law-givers of many nations, noting that many of them were divinely inspired and that prophets frequently became kings. He lists Moses as such a person. Strabo adds that Alexander Jannaeus (103–76 B.C.E.) was the first high priest to declare himself king of Judea, although most scholars agree with Josephus' statement that the previous ruler, Aristobulus, was the first. Further down Strabo mentions members of the dynasty of Herod as priests and kings.

Strabo's statement about Moses' opposition to graven images shows the influence of Hecataeus, cited by Diororus Siculus, XL, 3. 4 (Stern, no. 11). Strabo says nothing about disease or the Hyksos; Moses left because of dissatisfaction with Egyptian religion. The statement about people with good dreams' sleeping in the sanctuary recalls the Greek religious practice of incubation rather than any Jewish custom. The idea of decadence after Moses' time is new, arguably influenced by Greek philosophical ideas about the decadence of religion, reminiscent of Varro's statement about Roman religion in the passage, cited above, about religious images, which also shows resemblances to Strabo's praise of Moses' opposition to them. Opposition to the Jewish dietary laws is also unusual in a Greek author.

But truly unique to Strabo is the reference to female circumcision, unknown in Jewish tradition but found among many ethnic groups in Africa and elsewhere. At two other points, *Geography* XIV, 4. 21 (Stern, no. 118) and XVII, 2. 5 (Stern, no. 124), Strabo specifically states that the Jews practice female excision. The origin of this extraordinary statement is unknown (Stern, vol. I, p. 306). In general, Strabo has been said to have engaged in "idealizing ethnography" of the Jews, and his mostly favorable evaluation does not exclude elements of hostility, addressed toward the Jews of his own time. Like several of his predecessors, he reveals no knowledge of Jewish history between Moses and the Maccabees.[6]

Justin-Trogus

The Latin *Philippic Histories* of Pompeius Trogus, who lived at about the beginning of the common era, deal primarily with the history of the kingdoms founded by Alexander the Great's successors. They are extant only in an *Epitome*, composed in the third or fourth century C.E., and a separate *Prologue*, also composed by Justin. One passage, Book XXXVI, Epitome, 1.9–3.9 (Stern, no. 137), deals with Judaism. According to this passage, the Jews originated in Damascus, early Jewish kings there included Azelus (the biblical Hadad, king of Aram, according to evidence derived from Josephus), Adores

(Hazael), Abraham, and Israhel (Israel, Jacob); the latter had ten sons, as a result of which he became more famous than any of his ancestors. He thus divided his people into ten kingdoms, each ruled by one of the sons, and called them Jews in memory of Judas, who died soon after this division and whose portion was divided up among the surviving sons. The youngest brother, Joseph, was feared by his brothers due to his extraordinary abilities and was therefore secretly made prisoner and sold to foreign merchants. He was then, following the biblical account, honored by the king for his mastery of magic and skill in interpreting dreams, foretelling a famine and advising the king to put aside food. The story then diverges from that of Genesis; Joseph is honored so much that his advice seems to proceed from a god rather than a mortal.

Nothing is said about his brothers' entering Egypt. Instead, Trogus says that his son was Moses, who inherited his father's knowledge and was also known for his handsomeness. However, the Egyptians, troubled by scabies and leprosy and warned by an oracle, expelled Moses and those with the disease to avoid contagion. Moses became the leader of the exiles. He carried off the sacred utensils of the Egyptians, who tried forcibly to recover them but were compelled to return home by a storm. Having reached his ancestral home, Damascus, Moses took possession of Mt. Sinai. Upon arrival, having suffered in the Arabian deserts for seven days without food, he consecrated the seventh day, which used to be called Sabbath by the nation's custom, as a fast day, because that day had ended their hunger and wanderings. Remembering that they had been driven from Egypt from fear of spreading infection, they took care not to become odious to their neighbors for the same reason, deciding to avoid communication with strangers, a rule that gradually became a religious institution. After Moses, his son Arruas (Aaron) was made priest to supervise the Egyptian rites, and, from then on, same person customarily was both king and priest. As a result of their justice combined with their religion, it is almost incredible how powerful they became. After a digression about the geography of Palestine, Trogus goes on briefly to mention the Persian conquest followed by later political developments.

This version of the Exodus tradition is generally favorable to the Jews, even though it includes accusations of thievery, xenophobia, and disease, attached to a somewhat abbreviated and distorted account of the biblical story of Abraham and Joseph. There are here ten tribes; Joseph is the youngest brother, with no mention of Benjamin; Moses is the son of Joseph; much biblical material is omitted. The Sabbath is again misconceived as a fast day but here connected with the Exodus story. Certain biblical names appear that are absent from earlier pagan accounts, but, on the other hand, there is again no awareness of much of Jewish history, in this account from Aaron, incorrectly called the son of Moses, to the Persian conquest. The Maccabean assumption of the kingship by the priests is distorted into a tradition dating back to Moses. Feldman explains this mix of positive and negative attitudes by arguing that Trogus used a Jewish source as well as one on the Exodus that was hostile the Jews.

Lysimachus

This author may be identical with an Alexandrian Greek grammarian and mythographer who lived between the second century B.C.E. and the first century C.E. At any rate, the Lysimachus whose work on Egyptian history is extant in quotations in Josephus' *Against Apion* is cited by Apion and therefore preceded him. This author exhibits strongly the antisemitic attitudes of the Alexandrian Greek community.

In a citation from Lysimachus' *Aegyptiaca* in Josephus'*Against Apion* I, 304–311 (Stern, no. 158), we hear again about the oracle telling the Egyptian king that lepers, cripples, and the like were causing crop failures, so that they were expelled and the temples purified. The lepers and scurvy victims were drowned and the others driven to the desert to die; however, they assembled, built bonfires at night, fasted and implored the gods to save them, and, led by a certain Moses, made a straight track to the

nearest inhabited country. Moses advised them to show goodwill to no one, to offer the worst advice, and to overthrow any temples and altars of the gods they found. Following this advice, they traversed the desert with great hardships, reached inhabited country, maltreated the inhabitants, plundered and set fire to the temples, and finally reached Judea, where they built a city called Hierosyla (*hieros*, "holy," and *sylao*, "seize, plunder," thus "temple-robbery," "sacrilege," a word found in Plato and other pre-Hellenistic authors) after their sacrilegious habits. Later, having risen to power, they changed the name to the less disgraceful, altered form of the name, Hierosolyma. This version of the Exodus is even more negative towards the Jews than its predecessors, perhaps changing the material from Hecataeus and Manetho in this way. Descriptions of incidents during the Exodus from Egypt vaguely recall biblical material, perhaps distorted for polemical reasons by the Alexandrian Greeks Lysimachus used as sources. Three other passages in Josephus' *Against Apion* briefly castigate Lysimachus, one (II, 20, Stern, no. 160) for giving the "imaginary" figure of 110,000 exiles, the others (II, 145, Stern, no. 161; and II, 236, Stern, no. 162) for vilifying Moses and the Jews.

Apion

An Egyptian-Greek writer and scholar, Apion lived in the first half of the first century C.E. Unlike other writers who attacked the Jews with words, Apion is known to have been personally involved in antisemitic activities, having represented the Greeks of Alexandria in an embassy to the Roman Emperor Caligula in 39/40 C.E., after the riots of 38. Apion's *History of Egypt* survives only in citations, mostly in Josephus' *Against Apion*. This work (Stern, no. 164) notes that, according to Apion, Moses, a native of Heliopolis in Egypt, following Egyptian custom, set up open-air prayer-houses (*proseuxe*, the normal word for Jewish prayer-houses in the lands of the Hellenistic diaspora; Stern, vol. I, p. 395) in that city, with pillars beneath which was the model of a boat, the shadow cast by the pillars describing a circle corresponding to the sun's course in the heavens.

In a passage cited in *Against Apion* II, 15–17, 20–21, 25, 28 (Stern, no. 165), Apion gives an account of the Exodus somewhat similar to that in Lysimachus, adding that the word "Sabbath" comes from "sabbatosis," an Egyptian term for disease of the groin. The Jews had developed tumors in the groin after a six day's march; therefore, after reaching the country now called Judea, they rested on the seventh day. Josephus goes onto say that, according to another passage in Apion, appearing after the reference to the Exodus' lasting six days, Moses went up into Mt. Sinai, remained concealed there for forty days, and then descended and gave the Jews their laws.

Since, in the opinion of Schäfer, p. 29, Josephus seems to omit many details from Apion's account, it may be speculated, on account of reference to groin disease, that Apion alluded to circumcision. The account of the Sabbath is extremely hostile, while the material on prayer-houses is not, and, as Schäfer notes, there is nothing about either impiety or xenophobia on the part of the Jews, since Apion seems to think that the religion Moses introduced in Jerusalem was Egyptian. Stern (vol. I, p. 397) speculates that Apion added details from the biblical narrative to the common Greco-Egyptian tradition to try to depict Moses' isolation on the mountain as a ruse to fool the people into thinking the laws he invented had a divine origin.

Other passages from Apion's *Aegyptiaca*, cited in the same work of Josephus, attack the Jews for not worshipping the gods of Alexandria or erecting statues of the emperors (II, 65, 68, 73, 78, Stern, no. 169), for not eating pork, for practicing circumcision (II, 137, Stern, no. 176), and for having unjust laws and erroneous religious ceremonies resulting in conquest by foreign nations (II, 125, Stern, no. 174). Elsewhere Apion makes more extravagant assertions. At II, 79–80 (Stern, no. 170), Josephus states that, according to Apion, the Jews kept an ass's head made of gold, which they worshipped and considered worthy of the deepest reverence. This was discovered when

the troops of Antiochus Epiphanes looted the Temple.

This account differs from that in Diodorus Siculus XXXIV–XXXV, 1.1–5 (Stern, no. 63), which merely states that a statue of Moses seated on an ass was found in the Temple of Jerusalem. The ass-worship story is traced by modern scholars to the mythographer Mnaseas of Patara in Lycia, who, in about 200 B.C.E., was educator to the royal princes in Alexandria. Mnaseas' collection of myths and amazing tales, cited by Apion according to Josephus, *Against Apion*, II. 112–114 (Stern, nos. 28 and 172), says that in a war between the Jews and the neighboring Idumaeans, one of the latter stole the golden head of the pack-ass from the sanctuary; nothing is said about its being an object of worship. Scholars have attached the charge of ass-worship to various periods of Jewish history, from the Babylonian exile through the early second century B.C.E. and later. The identification by enemies of the Jews of the Jewish God with the Greek god Typhon, who was in turn identified with the Egyptian god Seth, the symbol of the desert and drought, enemy of fertility, associated with the wild ass, which carried Typhon away from battle with the gods, has been put forward by scholars, who note that Plutarch, discussed below, connects this flight of Typhon with Jewish origins.[7]

Apion attacks Judaism even more virulently in the passage quoted in *Against Apion* II, 89, 91–96 (Stern, no. 171), saying that Antiochus found in the Temple a couch on which a man was reclining before an elaborate banquet. The man asked the king to free him, stating that he, a Greek on a business trip, had been kidnapped, shut up secretly in the Temple, and fattened on elaborate feasts; eventually he heard that, according to Jewish law, at a certain time annually, the Jews kidnapped a Greek, fattened him up for a year, and then sacrificed him in a forest and ate him, swearing an oath of hostility to the Greeks. According to Schäfer, pp. 62–65, this story originates from Alexandrian Greek fear of the Jews rather than Seleucid propaganda, but Stern, vol. I, p. 412, holds the opposite view.[8] Apion again mentions the oath, as cited by Josephus, *Against Apion* II, 121 (Stern, no. 173).

Plutarch

This famous philosopher and biographer lived ca. 45 to ca. 125 C.E. A priest of the oracle at Delphi, he is the only resident of Greece proper among the Greek and Latin authors of the Roman imperial period who expressed views on Jews and Judaism. Although he visited Alexandria, his views on Judaism differed from those of many members of that city's Greek communities. Two passages in *On Superstition* 3, p. 166A and 8, p. 169C (Stern, nos. 255 and 256), refer to the Sabbath as superstition, the second noting that refusal to fight on that day led to military defeat. Another passage, in *Convivial Questions* 4, 4.4–6.2, pp. 669C–672B, is part of a work describing a banquet at which the guests, including Plutarch's brother, Lamprias, amuse themselves by discussing obscure questions, one of which is "whether the Jews abstain from pork because of reverence or aversion for the pig." Callistratus says the pig is honored because its snout cuts the soil like a plow or for similar reasons. The Jews, he continues, do not hate pigs: their law forbids killing as well as eating them. Lamprias argues that the Jews abstain from the hare because of its resemblance to the ass, which they honor. He adds that they abominate pork because of fear of leprosy-like diseases, and the underside of the pig is covered with scaly eruptions indicative of such a malady. Additionally, he adduces the filthiness of the pig's habits and the (alleged) fact that their eyes are so twisted downward that they are unable to see the sky or anything above them unless carried upside down, on which occasion the pig, which usually squeals, stands astonished by the sight of the sky. Adonis, believed to be identical with Dionysus, was slain by the boar according to mythology.

The next question concerns the god of the Jews. Moeragenes tries to prove that the Jewish God is actually Dionysus, because the Jews celebrate a so-called fast at the height of the vintage, setting out tables with fruit under tents and huts mostly made of

vines and ivy. They call the first of the days of the feast Tabernacles. A few days later they celebrate a feast that, Moeragenes argues, is openly identified with Bacchus (Dionysus), a sort of "procession of branches" or "thyrsus procession," in which they enter the Temple each carrying a thyrsus (branch). What they do after entering "we do not know," but the rite is probably a Bacchic revelry, since they use little trumpets to invoke their god, as do Greek Dionysus-worshippers. Others of them advance playing harps; these players are called in their language "Levites," either from *Lysios*, Releaser, or *Evius*, god of the cry.

The Sabbath is also related to Dionysus, since many Greeks call the Bacchants *Sabi*, who utter that cry when celebrating their god. In addition, the use of wine during the Sabbath proves this connection. The High Priest leads their procession, wearing a miter and dressed in a gold-embroidered fawnskin, a long robe, and high boots, with bells attached to his clothes, all of which correspond to Greek customs related to Dionysus-worship. Also, they have noise as an element in their nocturnal festivals, and a thyrsus is carved in relief on the Temple's pediment; drums are used. All this proves that the Jews have no divinity but Dionysus, as does the non-use of honey at their religious festivals. Finally, people are sometimes punished by being forbidden to drink wine.

This is one of the longest continuous passages on Judaism in extant pagan Greek literature and includes information on Jewish holiday services that, although muddled, is not found elsewhere. The discussion of the prohibition of pork vaguely recalls the Greco-Egyptian charge that the Exodus was actually an expulsion of lepers. Many Greeks, associating any ritual involving vines or wine with Dionysus, thought that god was thus being worshipped; as noted below, Tacitus, unsympathetic to the Jews, argued against the identification of Judaism and Dionysus-worship. Scholars have postulated that another source of this association was the Greeks' identification of Dionysus with Sabazius, who Valerius Maximus in turn had identified with the Jewish God. The idea of syncretism between Dionysiac worship in Judea and Judaism has been generally rejected. The fast is clearly Yom Kippur, which precedes Tabernacles by four days, a fact that may have led Plutarch to confuse these holidays. The thyrsus is the *lulav*, palm-branch, carried on all seven days of the holiday. The trumpets are *shofars*, used in the Temple. The mention of the Levites is unique in pagan literature; that to the use of wine on the Sabbath is found elsewhere only in the Latin poetry of Persius (*Satires* 5, 179–184, Stern, no. 190). The reference to abstention from wine as a punishment is believed to refer to the ascetic institution of the Naziriteship.

Plutarch clearly used a source dating from before the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 C.E. The attitude towards Judaism is generally favorable except for the hints about leprosy and the honoring of the ass.[9] Plutarch also refers to the Exodus by stating in *Concerning Isis and Osiris* 31, p. 363C-D (Stern, no. 259), that those who say the god Typhon's flight from battle (see above, under Apion) was made on the back of an ass, lasted seven days, and that he had two sons, Hierosolymus and Judaeus, are trying to drag Jewish traditions into legend. The only passage referring to Judaism in Plutarch's *Lives, Life of Cicero* 7.6, p. 864C (Stern, no. 263), relates to Cicero's prosecution of Verres for extortion. Someone involved in the case was suspected of Jewish practices; Cicero said, according to Plutarch, "What has a Jew to do with a Verres," since *verres* is Latin for a castrated pig.

Tacitus

Cornelius Tacitus, 56–120 C.E., was one of Rome's greatest historians. A senator nostalgic for the days of the Roman republic and traditional customs, he distrusted foreigners and their alien religious ideas, therefore holding extremely negative views of the Jews and Judaism and apparently fearing proselytization. Most of his references to Judaism appear in his account in the *Histories* of the revolt of 70 C.E. and its suppression. IV, 1–13 (Stern, no. 281) contains a digression on Jewish origins and customs preliminary to the description of the war. Tacitus gives varying accounts of the origin

of the Jews, including the theories that they represented the superfluous population of Egypt, emigrating to neighboring lands under the leadership of Hierosolymus and Iuda and that they were the Solymi, an ancient and illustrious people. He concludes that most authors agree that they were expelled from Egypt by a plague causing bodily disfigurement. Considered hateful to the gods, they were abandoned in the desert, weeping. Moses then told them that they would have to fend for themselves, regarding as a guide from heaven whoever gave them escape. They agreed, setting forth in utter ignorance and trusting to chance. Suffering from scarcity of water, they saw a herd of wild asses, which they followed to abundant streams of water. They then marched for six days, reaching and seizing a country on the seventh, expelling its people and founding a city and a temple.

To establish his influence over this people for all times, Moses introduced new religious practices, quite opposed to those of all other religions. The Jews consider profane all that Romans consider sacred, and *vice versa*, dedicating a shrine to the ass, sacrificing animals the Egyptians worship, abstaining from pork because the plague that once afflicted them now afflicts this animal, and frequently fasting to commemorate the hunger they experienced during the flight from Egypt. The unleavened Jewish bread is still used in memory of the haste with which they seized the grain. The Jews say they first chose to rest on the seventh day because that day ended their labors; now they also rest every seventh year due to laziness. Others say they do this in honor of Saturn, because the Ideaeans, according to tradition the ancestors of the Jews, were expelled with (the Roman god) Saturn or because the planet of that name moves in the highest orbit and has the greatest potency.

Tacitus goes on to say that while these rites are supported by their antiquity, the other customs of the Jews are base and abominable, owing their persistence to their depravity. The worst rascals among other religions convert to Judaism, sending tribute to Jerusalem. The Jews are loyal towards one another, always ready to show compassion, but feel only hate and enmity for other peoples. They eat and sleep apart and, although prone to lust, abstain from intercourse with foreign women, while among themselves nothing is unlawful. Adopting circumcision to distinguish themselves from other people, they convert people who follow the same practice. "The earliest lesson they receive is to despise the gods, disown their country, and to regard as of little account their parents, children, and brothers."

Wanting to increase their numbers, Jews consider it a crime to kill any late-born child; they believe the souls of those killed in battle or executed are immortal: hence comes their passion for begetting children and their scorn of death. They bestow care on the dead and bury rather than cremate them, following the Egyptian custom. They also follow Egyptian belief regarding the world below, though they have opposite ideas about heavenly things. Instead of worshipping animals, the Jews conceive of one god, and that with the mind only. Thus they regard as impious those who make graven images. "That supreme and eternal being is to them incapable of representation and without end." Accordingly, they set up no statues in their cities, still less in their temples, honoring neither kings nor Caesars.

Tacitus mentions similarities, as does Plutarch, between Jewish and Dionysiac practices but denies that the Jews worship that god, for Jewish rites, unlike the joyous ones of Dionysus, are preposterous and mean. Tacitus then describes the geography of Judea, mentioning the wealth of Jerusalem and the Temple within the city's innermost wall. Only Jews could approach its doors, and only the priests could cross its threshold. The (Maccabean) kings assumed the priesthood to support their civil authority. The first Roman to subdue the Jews and enter their Temple was Pompey, who found there no representations of the gods. The place was empty, and the secret shrine contained nothing. The walls of Jerusalem, but not the Temple, were torn down. The Jews revolted rather than put up Caligula's statue in the Temple, but his death ended the revolt. The Temple was built like a fortress, because the city's founders expected many wars, since the ways of the people differed so much from those of their neighbors. During

a factional struggle between two Jewish generals, one, sending a party under pretext of offering sacrifice, got possession of the Temple. Before the Romans took the Temple in 70 C.E., prodigies occurred. The Jews, according to Tacitus, forbid averting them by victims or vows; although superstitious, they oppose all propitiatory rites. Contending hosts were seen in the skies, the Temple was illuminated with fire from the clouds, and the doors suddenly opened, a superhuman voice crying, "The gods are departing." However, this was interpreted as confirming the prophecy that the east would grow strong and that men starting from Judea should possess the world (Vespasian and Titus, according to Tacitus, but the Jews thought otherwise).

This mostly hostile account of Judaism includes some information not found elsewhere in pagan authors and is, in fact, not entirely unfavorable. This includes material derived from a pro-Jewish source, such as the theory that the Jews are of noble origin, being the Solymi, the observation of the seventh day in honor of Saturn (compare the English word "Saturday"), belief in immortality, and the idea that God cannot be represented and is without end.[10]

The Exodus story follows the negative characterizations of Manetho, Pompeius Trogus, and other writers, with variations. The "herd of wild asses" reference recalls the accusation of ass-worship. Tacitus is the only pagan writer to refer to unleavened bread. Proselytes are attacked as traitors to their families and country. In connection with the Exodus story, Tacitus says that the Jews dedicated a statue of an ass, while elsewhere he remarks the prohibition of graven images and the absence of them in the Temple, an inconsistency noted by the second- and third-century Christian writer Tertullian (*Apologetic* 16, 1–4). However, Tacitus merely says that "many authors" mention the statue, as Stern notes (vol. II, p. 37). Tacitus is also the only pagan writer to refer unambiguously to the sabbatical year, although he claims that it involves rest from all, not merely agricultural, work. Although Tacitus expresses hostility towards all non-Romans, he uses extreme language against the Jews.

Another passage from Tacitus, cited by the fourth-fifth century Christian writer Sulpicius Severus (*Chronicle* II, 30. 3, 6, 7, Stern, no. 282) has the Emperor Titus favoring the destruction of the Temple in order to destroy both Judaism and Christianity, which, although opposed, stem from the same origin. The expulsion of the Jews from Rome by the Emperor Tiberius in 19 C.E., for proselytizing, it is implied, is mentioned in *Annals* II, 85.4 (Stern, no. 284).

Conclusion

To the pagan Greeks, and, later, the Romans, nations like the Greek city-states and other societies that were equated with them in such works as Aristotle's *Politics* and collection of *Constitutions* had their particular histories, foundation-myths, customs, rituals, and gods, and these were equated with those of the Greeks or Romans. While differing substantially in particulars, they had much generally in common, as did the Greek city-states themselves. Encounters with new peoples in Alexander the Great's time and afterward did not essentially change this way of thinking, since the Greeks had long been aware of the somewhat different society of Egypt, described through Greek eyes by, among others, Herodotus and Plato.

The Jews, however, differed in several essential respects. They worshipped a single God whom they would not equate or worship along with any pagan god and of whom they would not make images. Monotheism in this strict sense, as opposed to the vague, philosophical monotheism of a Plato or Aristotle, was incomprehensible to almost all the pagan Greeks and Romans whose writings survive. Almost equally incomprehensible was Jewish exclusiveness; Jews would neither intermarry nor, owing to their dietary laws, eat with non-Jews. Driven out of Egypt in ancient times (so many if not most pagans believed), the Jews hated the rest of the human race and yet, the Romans believed, tried to convert them to their beliefs. Too often succeeding, the Jews menaced civilization.

Many aspects of the Greek attitude towards the Jews probably stemmed from

Egyptian antisemitism, although general anti-foreign prejudices were also present. The Romans often felt threatened by foreign immigration in general and Jewish immigration in particular, as well as proselytization by foreign cults including Judaism. Greek and Roman philo-semitism, as exemplified by Plutarch and Varro, praised Judaism essentially in Greek and Roman terms, comparing, for example, the Jewish prohibition of graven images with the lack of images of the gods among the earliest Romans. But overall, to Greek and Roman pagans, the Jews, to a far greater extent than other foreigners they encountered, were almost wholly "other" and therefore greatly misunderstood. Sadly, some of these misunderstandings, or variants of them, persisted into much later times, often with tragic results.

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NOTES

[1] Menahem Stern's three-volume collection of passages referring to the Jews in ancient Greek and Roman literary sources is substantially complete, presenting each passage under its own number and offering Stern's own comments. Below, citations to the passages are referred to as "Stern, [number of passage]." Citations of Stern's commentaries appear as "Stern, [volume number], [page number]".

[2] *Studies in Hellenistic Judaism* (Leiden, 1996), p. 20; *Jew and Gentile in the Ancient World: Attitudes and Interactions from Alexander to Justinian* (Princeton, 1993), pp. 124, 175.

[3] Stern, no. 11. This particular passage itself survives only through an excerpt in a book of readings, the *Library*, written and compiled by the Byzantine scholar Photius.

[4] Stern, vol. I, pp. 23–4, concludes that Josephus may have used a Jewish revision of a work of Hecataeus.

[5] See Feldman, *Jew and Gentile*, pp. 237–238, and Stern, vol. I, pp. 163–164.

[6] On Strabo, see Schäfer, pp. 24–26, 38, 89–94, and 108; Stern, vol. I, pp. 261–267 and 304–311.

[7] Detailed discussion of this material, appears in Schäfer, pp. 55–61, and Stern, vol. I, pp. 97–98 and 410.

[8] See also Louis H. Feldman, "Pro-Jewish Intimations in Anti-Jewish Remarks cited in Josephus' *Against Apion*," in *Studies in Hellenistic Judaism*, pp. 177–236, especially at pp. 205–206.

[9] See Stern, vol. II, pp. 545–548 and 558–62; Schäfer, pp. 53–57 and 72–74; and Feldman, "The Jews as Viewed by Plutarch," *Studies in Hellenistic Judaism*, pp. 529–552.

[10] See Louis H. Feldman, "Pro-Jewish Intimations in Tacitus' Account of Jewish Origins," *Studies in Hellenistic Judaism*, pp. 377–407. Schäfer, p. 41, notes this fact but does not go as far as Feldman regarding Tacitus' pro-Jewish intimations, regarding these passages instead as "the grand synthesis of Roman attitudes toward Jews" (p. 185).

Pagan Philosophers on Judaism in Ancient Times

WITHIN the ancient world, lyric and epic poets were the first to comment on Judea, the Jews, and Judaism,[1] and their comments greatly influenced later Greek, Hellenistic, and Roman views of the Jewish people and their religion. The earliest reference to Palestine in Greek literature is from the writings of the poet Alcaeus (end of the seventh century B.C.E.), who mentions the destruction of the Philistine city Askelon by the Babylonians. Later, Choerilus of Samos (second half of the fifth century B.C.E.) wrote an epic poem on the Persian Wars in which he catalogued all the nations that took part in the expedition of Xerxes against Greece. Among these, he tells us, was a wonderful race that spoke a Phoenician language and lived near a broad lake.

Although it is unlikely that the people to whom Choerilus referred were Jews,[2] the passage turned out to define Greek and Roman views of Jews and Judaism. Since the Solymian mountains are mentioned in the *Odyssey* (V, 283), and a people called Solymi appear in the *Iliad* (VI, 184), these Homeric reminiscences gave rise to the association of the name Solyma with Hierosolyma, that is, Jerusalem. Henceforth, Josephus would quote Choerilus as evidence of the glory of the Jewish people, Manetho

would refer to his catalogue as evidence of Jewish enmity towards all things Greek, and Tacitus would use it to connect the Jews with the Solymi, a people celebrated in the Homeric poems, suggesting an illustrious ancestry for the Jewish people (*Historiae* V, 2:3).

Philosophical and Religious Background

The first pagan philosophical studies of the Jews and Judaism were driven by what Aristotle called "the desire to know" (*Metaphysics* I, 980a). Although the existing works of Aristotle do not mention the Jews, his curiosity for geography was complemented by his students' curiosity for ethnography. As a result, the figure of the learned Hellenized Jew dominates the earliest philosophical accounts of Jews and Judaism. For the first Hellenistic philosophers regarded Jews as philosophers and Judaism as an enlightened philosophical religion. While it is unlikely that these reports are historically correct, they offer an accurate "cultural" portrait of how pagan philosophers viewed Jews in the fourth and third centuries B.C.E., especially important since this perspective persisted throughout antiquity.

The Greeks had been a long tradition of tracing their intellectual roots to the East. Even Plato had reported a dialogue between Solon and Egyptian priests (*Timaeus* 22–25), and in the wake of such testimony, later Platonists would identify Pythagoras and implicitly Plato as followers of Moses. Aristotelians, too, viewed Jewish cultic practices as indicative of a higher, philosophical religion. And Philo of Alexandria, drawing from both traditions, claimed that Pythagoras, Plato, Heraclitus, Parmenides, Empedocles, Zeno, and Cleanthes learned their philosophy from Moses, and that Judaism was a higher religion (*Legatio ad Gaium* 356). He thus brought full circle the Greek tradition of apologetic invention regarding the peoples of the orient.[3]

Theophrastus (372–288/7 B.C.E.) declared Jews to be philosophers devoted to philosophical observation. Speaking of the sacrifices they offered to God, he said, "throughout this time they discourse together about the divine, because they are philosophers by nature, and at night they observe the stars, watching them and addressing them in their prayers" (cited in Porphyry, *De Abs.* II, 26). The Jews' observing of the stars was important because, in the eyes of Aristotelians (and Platonists), the orderly motion of the heavenly bodies constituted one of the chief demonstrations of God's existence. Although he did not explicitly mention the belief in one God, Theophrastus' use of the term "the divine" (*to theion*) to describe Jewish discussions on God suggests admiration. Finally, approving of their cultic practices, he stated that although the Jews introduced animal sacrifice, they practiced it reluctantly. Moreover, the way they did it differs radically from the Greeks. They do not eat meat, but only sacrifice holocausts, and these they do in haste in the darkness of night, when they pour out honey and wine. Theophrastus, at least according to Porphyry, disapproved of animal sacrifice, thinking it unworthy of philosophers.

Aristotle's student Clearchus of Soli (347–345 B.C.E.) reported that Aristotle met a Jew in Asia Minor who was Greek "not only in language but also in spirit." He came from the mountains to the seashore "to meet with the Stagarite and his pupils because he was interested in their philosophy." The Greeks, however, "learned philosophy from him."[4] Clearchus goes on to comment: "The Jews are the descendants of the philosophers of India. They say that the philosophers are *Kalanoi* among the Indians, Jews among the Syrians; the name is derived from their place of habitation, Judah. The name of their town which is very strange is Hierousaleme" (see Josephus, *C. Ap.* 179, 16ff.). A similar estimate of Jews as philosophers is offered by Megasthenes (c. 300 B.C.E.), a contemporary of Seleucus Nicator, who visited India and wrote a book on his encounter with a Jewish philosopher.[5]

Hecataeus of Abdera (c. 300 B.C.E.), perhaps a pupil of Pyrron the Sceptic, closely identified the Jews and Jewish institutions with the Egyptians, and he coupled the Jews with emigrants to Greece led by Cadmus and Danaus. He held Moses (and perhaps Abraham) in high regard, praised Jewish

monotheism and its cultic practices, and thought highly of Judaism as a priestly religion.[6]

Shortly afterwards, however, such positive perspectives on Jews and Judaism turned negative. Under Ptolemy II, the Hellenо-Egyptian priest Manetho published an Egyptian history that discredited Jewish origins (see Josephus, *C. Ap.* I, 73–91; 93–105; 228–252). In one account, he related the history of the Jews to the Egyptian Hyksos, to whom he connected the building of Jerusalem. In a second account, he identified the Jews of Jerusalem with the hated Hyksos. He characterized them as a mob of degraded lepers, as polluters of traditional Egyptian religion, and identified their leader, Osarsiph, with Moses. The Jews, he proposed, subdued Egypt even more brutally than the Hyksos. They burned down towns and villages, plundered temples, defiled the images of the gods, converted shrines into sties, and roasted the flesh of sacred animals. Ultimately King Amenophis defeated the Jews, and, after a period of slavery, allowed them under the leadership of Osarsiph or Moses to migrate to the frontiers of Syria. Here they built Jerusalem.

Manetho's accounts are significant because they initiate an anti-Jewish attitude in Hellenistic views of the Jews and Judaism. Debate rages over the cause of his hostility towards the Jews and concerning whether it explains the origins of antisemitism in antiquity,[7] especially since Manetho did not invent these "legends" himself. Rather he most likely used them in disputations with Jews over the biblical story of Egyptian bondage. In any case Manetho's views were taken over by later Greeks and Romans, who, for generations, offered even less flattering descriptions, in particular, leveling against the Jews charges of *misanthropia*, *misoxenia*, and *amixia*.

Josephus reports that Posidonius (135–51 B.C.E.) and Apollonius of Molon (c. first century B.C.E.) also were not sympathetic towards the Jews, and that their stories were used later by Apion in a growing tradition of anti-Jewish propaganda (*C. Ap.* II, 79ff.). The idea of Jewish misanthropy was based on the charge that Jews abstained from worshipping the gods revered by others, worshipping instead an ass-head in the Jerusalem Temple. Most chilling, Damocritos (first century C.E.?) accused the Jews of blood-libel, by annual cultic murder of a Greek. Nicarchus even noted that Moses was called "Alpha" because he was a leper (*De Iudaeis*, cited in Photius, *Lexicon*, s.v. *alpha*.).

Although the social setting of such profiles is difficult to reconstruct, it appears they first arose in literary circles close to Antiochus Epiphanes, who had desecrated the Temple. It is also likely that these tales derived from a literary genre that dealt with "conspiracies" against Antiochus' attempts to Hellenize his empire, including Judea. But this battle against the Jews was largely a "paper war," as early anti-Jewish sources were used assiduously by later pagan writers to verify Jewish antipathy towards all things Greek. The supposed Jewish loathing of and unwillingness to merge with others became standard fare in descriptions of Jews by Diodorus Siculus, Lysimachus, and Philostratus.[8]

Despite such attacks, positive assessments of Jews and Judaism also continued and even accelerated. A positive view is reflected in the Pythagorean work *De Universi Natura* attributed to Ocellus Lucanus (c. second century B.C.E.), who, in a comment on human sexuality, remarked on the customs of the Jews. Referring to the Septuagint translation of Gen. 1:28, Ocellus argued that the organs and impulses of sexual intercourse were supplied by God not for pleasure but to perpetuate the human race.[9] Therefore a man should not leave his home, city, family, or God. Rather, as an intelligent man, he should fulfill his prescribed procreative duty, to insure that the earth is populated by an abundance of good men (*De Universi Natura* 45–46). Thus the Jews are commended for setting an ethical precedent for humanity.

In his *Peri Ioudaion*, Alexander Polyhistor (first century B.C.E.) wrote extensively on the Jews. Josephus refers to him when he quotes from a history of the Jews written by Cleodemus-Malchus (or Malchas), in which a genealogical list from Gen. 25:3–4 is introduced to relate the progeny of Abraham

and Keturah. Some of their children are said to have accompanied Heracles in his campaigns against Libya and Antaeus. Moreover, we are told that Heracles married a granddaughter of Abraham and Keturah, and their grandson Sophon gave their name to the African people of Sophakes. The relations between Abraham and Heracles have their counter-part in the legendary traditions of kinship between the Jews and Sparta. In general, the claim by Greeks of genealogical and religious ties to Jews became a commonplace feature among historians and philosophers in this period.

Strabo of Amaseia (c. 64 B.C.E.–20 C.E.) referred to Moses as a legislator of supreme status, placing him alongside such Greek lawgivers such as Minos, Lycurgus, and Tiresias (*Geographica* XVI, 760–765). The Jewish God similarly is viewed most positively, as "that which surrounds us all, also the earth and the sea; we call him the heavens, or the world, or the nature of the whole universe" (XVI, 760–761). Here the elements of Judaism were framed within a pantheistic outlook—imageless worship, the apotheosis of the divine in a modest shrine, all befitting a people and religion of wisdom and righteousness.

The God of the Jews was also viewed as a protector of humankind and the patron of kings. Writing on kingship, the Pythagorean pseudo-Ecphantus (first to second centuries C.E.) alluded to Genesis. First, he noted the fall of man from his pure nature and argued that he was raised from earth by "divine inspiration," which "attached him to the eternal living being, displaying to his better part the holy aspect of the creator."[10] Second, he claimed that while man is the best among earthly creatures, the king is still more divine, for he has been "made by the best craftsman, who wrought him using himself as a model. Thus the king is the one and only creature to represent the king of heaven, being always known to his Creator." Such sources propose that Greek and Jew share common cultural origins, histories, and religions. This is a quite different perspective from the other central one of this period, in which, as we shall see, the Jews and their cult were subjected to significant hostility.

Greco-Roman Philosophy (106 B.C.E..–555 C.E.)

To characterize Hellenic and Roman attitudes towards Jews and Judaism is difficult, for these stretch from amusement to contempt, dislike, and active hostility. For some gentiles, Judaism was so appealing as to invite conversion. For others, Jewish religious rites such as circumcision seemed barbaric, the dietary laws appeared ridiculous, and the refusal to acknowledge other gods was impious atheism. Nonetheless, Roman imperial policy decreed that, as a foreign cult, Judaism comprised an official religion of the empire, an important status since, in the capital, magistrates were charged with prohibiting foreign rites, sacrificers, soothsayers, and books of prophecy other than the Roman (Pliny, *Ep.* 39.16.8, 4.30, 25.1). While this policy focused positively upon Jews as citizens of the empire, it nonetheless looked negatively on Judaism as a tolerated cult.[11] This began to change only in the early fourth century, when Roman imperial policy began to view the Jewish religion favorably. To comprehend this shift we must look at Roman policies towards Judaism.

State religion in the empire was governed by a *princeps* who, as *pontifex maximus*, was responsible for public morals and the well-being of the state. Precisely what both responsibilities entailed shifted from emperor to emperor. What remained constant after Augustus was the Caesars' inclusion of foreign gods and cults in the state religion. Since Judaism was among the earliest of the religions to be recognized, it remained under imperial protection (but not sanction) until the close of antiquity. Even so, traditional Helleno-Egyptian antipathy towards the Jews, alongside Jewish revolts against Roman hegemony in the eastern empire, colored pagan philosophical views of Jews and Judaism in the first two centuries of the *imperium Romanum*. Only the climate of the rise of Christianity in the last three centuries of Roman antiquity led pagan philosophers to begin to assess Jews and Judaism positively.

Early Roman Philosophy (116 B.C.E.–220 C.E.)

In two main passages on the Jews in his major work, *Res Divinae*, Varro (116–27 B.C.E.) offers the first systematic attempt to explain Judaism from the perspective of an advocate of traditional Roman religion. He identifies the Jewish God with Jupiter and says that he is called Iao in the Chaldean mysteries. We cannot say where Varro got the latter name. It may have been from the neo-Pythagorean Nigidius Figulus. In any case, he attempts to link the God of the Jews with Greek philosophical thought.[12]

The Jewish censure of cult images most impressed Varro. He argued that the iconoclastic Jewish cult exemplifies pure and useful worship and resembles the original cult of old Rome (cited in Augustine, *Civ. Dei* VI, 31). Here he saw a close connection between Greek and Jewish philosophical thought. The cult of images had long been criticized by Aristotelian philosophers, and Stoics from Zeno to Seneca also poured ridicule on images. Add to this the argument that image worship detracts from the fear of the gods, and we have Varro's profile of Judaism's nobility.

Cicero (106–43 B.C.E.) had an ambiguous attitude towards the Jews and Judaism. Unlike Varro, no mention of them appeared in his philosophical works, and he exhibited no appreciation for the incorporeal nature of the Jewish deity. Only in his rhetorical writings—*Pro Flacco* and *De Provinciis Consularibus*—do we encounter Cicero's views, and his comments are most disparaging. But we should remember that these were rhetorical speeches crafted to defend Flaccus and to impugn Gabinius, who was closely connected with the Jews. In brief, Jews were instrumental in the prosecution of Flaccus, siding with Gabinius. Therefore, they were perceived as an enemy of the Roman Publicani and hence as enemies of republican Rome. On this account, Cicero mercilessly attacked the Jews and Judaism.[13]

The judicial and polemical contexts of these speeches define how we should read them. It was a commonplace in forensic rhetoric to denigrate opponents, and Cicero himself stresses the differences between his personal views and those expressed in his speeches (*Pro Flacco* 139). Thus in *Pro Flacco* other "Asians," labeled by the speaker as Phrygians, Mysians, Carians, and Lydians, fare no better than the Jews. Further, since his attack does not even resemble the charges of misanthropy and incompetence brought against the Jews by his acquaintance Apollonius Molon, we need not label Cicero's views as anti-Jewish.[14]

Nonetheless, what Cicero said about the Jews and Judaism was hardly flattering. Laelius had sued Flaccus on behalf of the cities of Roman Syria. Among the charges brought against him was that, while in Asia, he confiscated Jewish money. In defense of his client, Cicero called Judaism a "barbara superstitio." He noted Jews' "raging" in the *cantiones* and claimed that Pompey did not pillage the Jerusalem Temple because he respected the Jews. Rather he did so because of his own sense of honor and political expediency (*Pro Flacco* XXVIII, 67). Finally, he reminds his audience of the barbaric religion of the Jews, of the noble ancestral traditions of the Romans, and of the recent war the Jews waged against Rome (XXVIII, 68).

In the *De Provinciis Consularibus* Cicero impugns the character of Gabinius, the enemy of the *publicani*. He does so by noting Gabinius' association with disreputable peoples such as Syrians and Jews, people born to be slaves (*De Prov. Consul* V:10).[15] He thus cast the Jews as adversaries of the republic and friends of its enemies: Gabinius, Piso, and indirectly Caesar (V:12). Clearly, late republican politics lie behind this attack. The opponents of the *publicani* were supported by the Jews of Rome. Moreover, consuls such as Gabinius in Syria allied himself with Syrians and Jews against the *publicani* and the taxes levied by them.

Their goal was to transfer tax collection from the Roman societies of *publicani* to local authorities. It is likely that the five synhedria were made responsible for the collection of taxes (Josephus, *Ant.* XIV, 91; *BJ* I, 170). Cicero's main argument against the Jews was cast within the context of Gabinius' governorship of Syria and his improper attitude towards the *publicani*. His policies led to the financial and political ruin of Cicero's clients and constituency.

Seneca (c. end of the first century B.C.E.–65 C.E.) was the first Latin philosopher deliberately to attack Jews and Judaism for their negative impact on Roman society. Although he showed antipathy towards oriental religions in general,[16] his critique of Judaism is rather different, standing outside the context of a philosophical critic of the rationality of Judaism as a religion, or a critique of Judaism from a defender of the *mos maiorum*.

Seneca's references to the Jews date from the 60s C.E.[17] This was the height of Jewish proselytizing and the spread of Jewish customs in the Mediterranean world. As a defender of traditional Roman religion, he was disturbed by the spread of the religion of the "gens sceleratissima" throughout the empire, noting that "the vanquished have given laws to their victors" (*De Superstitione*, cited in Augustine, *Civ. Dei* VI, 11). These laws included, for instance, the custom of lighting lamps on the Sabbath. But in the Roman view, the gods do not need light. Nor do they need morning salutations before the doors of temples. For Seneca, rather, "God is worshipped by those who really know him. Let us forbid bringing towels and flesh-scrapers to Jupiter and offering mirrors to Juno; for God seeks no servants. Of course not; he himself does service to mankind everywhere, and to all he is at hand to help" (Plutarch, *Epistula Morales* XCV, 47). These attacks likely were formulated to counter the claims of some Jews that their religion was of a higher type than others and to respond to Romans who were impressed by the abstract monotheism and cultic purity of Judaism.

Seneca stayed for a time with his aunt in Egypt, and there he may have encountered his ideas about Judaism. While there is little evidence that Philo of Alexandria was read outside of Jewish circles in Alexandria, his views, for instance, that Judaism is a philosophy, may comprise the sort of conceptions that Seneca felt it necessary to critique. Seneca clearly held an idea already encountered in Hecataeus and Manetho, that the Jewish religion encourages *amixia*, an unwillingness to merge with others. In Seneca, this notion is located within a specific Roman context. Judaism is in no way a philosophical religion.

In his *Life of Apollonius of Tyana* Philostratus (d. 240 C.E.) presents a less than enthusiastic attitude towards oriental cults, depicting the Jews in particular as in perpetual revolt against Rome and humanity. They are "separated from ourselves by a greater gulf than divides us from Susa or Bactra or the more distant Indies" (*Vita Apollonii* V, 33–34). Their cult is so bloodily abhorrent that the "divine" Apollonius refused to visit Judea (V, 27), so polluted that a Pythagorean's abhorrence of shedding blood prevents him from visiting Judea (VI, 34).

In *Apollonius*, Pythagorean antipathy towards the Jews appears excessive. But again we must be cautious in ascribing to Philostratus the charge of anti-Jewish propaganda. His attitude towards the Jews is conditioned, rather, by his implicit polemic against Christians. Moreover, Pythagorean fervor against blood-letting and taboos against sacrifice were commonly known in antiquity. Indeed, these ideas stretch back to the master himself. The strictest of the Pythagoreans, like Apollonius, called the Pure, rejected all fleshy food and respected only altars unstained by blood. They shunned all contact with hunters, butchers, cooks, and, in this case, priests of the Jerusalem cult.

While Seneca was hostile to the Jews, the other great Stoic, Epictetus (50–130 C.E.), was neutral. In a discussion on the need for a criterion for good and evil he pointed out the differences in the opinions on food of the Jews, Syrians, Egyptians, and Romans (Arrian, *Dissertationes* I, 11:12–13). He went on to note that these nations do not disagree over whether holiness should be pursued but on whether eating pig is holy or not (I, 22:4). A final reference implies that Epictetus knew of the rite of baptism in conversion to Judaism (II, 9:19–21). Striking here is Epictetus' almost casual acquaintance with Jewish customs. By the first century some knowledge of Jews and Judaism was commonplace, particularly at Rome and in the eastern provinces of the empire, as Plutarch and Sextus Empiricus attest.

Plutarch (45–125 C.E.) came from a prominent family of Chaeronea in Boeotia. As a student in around 66–67 C.E. he went to Athens and became a follower of Ammonius, the head of the Academy, who gave

him a thorough training in philosophy (*De E.* 387f.). Sent on a political mission to Rome, he eventually returned there to teach and to learn. Later he settled in Chaeronea, where a circle grew up around him.[18]

Plutarch was extremely great loyalty to the temple of Apollo at Delphi. He assumed that all nations worshipped gods who performed similar functions. For Plutarch, most Mediterranean myths and rites thus were good, created by wise men whose insights included all the best that posterity later came to learn in philosophy. At least in *Quaestiones Convivales*, this same view framed his picture of the Jewish God and religion.

Plutarch thus speaks of believers as searching out through reason the truths inherent in the mysteries. Accordingly, in his work *On Isis and Osiris*, dedicated to a friend, Clea, who had been initiated into the mysteries of Dionysus, Isis, and Osiris, Plutarch studies the names, myths, and rituals of the Egyptian gods. He finds in them the same meanings and functions as those in the Greek cults. And Plutarch takes a similar approach to the study of Judaism, which he examines from the perspective of a second century Platonist. To understand his approach, let us briefly outline the salient points of his philosophy.[19]

In his discussion of Apollo, Plutarch argued that the traditional gods were aspects of the one god (*De E* 392eff., *De Is.* 351d, 382b, *De Fac.* 944e), with the Logos comprising the principal intermediary between the intelligible and sensible worlds. He showed this through an allegorization of the two aspects of Osiris (*De Is.* 373ab). Below the primal God and Intelligence, Plutarch posited a World Soul (*De Is.* 373e) and daemons (*Def. Or.* 416cff.). This metaphysical hierarchy is significant because later Platonic philosophers with a little knowledge of Judaism and the Septuagint read Plutarch and identified the God of Genesis with the artificer of the Plato's Timaeus (*Co. Apol.* 109ad).

Following a hint in the *Symposium*, Plutarch also argued that God acts through *daimones*. Good daemons of compact intelligence and passionate soul care for men, give oracles, and appear in visions (*Co. Apol.* 109ad). These daemons are the gods of native religions (*De Is.* 361ae). However, there are also bad or imperfect daemons, which are malevolent (*Def. Or.* 944cd, cf. 415c). As clients of an evil world soul, these powers bring evil into the world (*De Fac.* 945b, *De Is.* 360dff., 361b, *Def. Or.* 417b). Significantly within the context of this study, Plutarch argues that evil daemons cause superstition or *deisidaemonia*, which is fear of the gods brought on by obsession and ignorance. In brief, he holds that superstition separates people from society because the superstitious person does not use reason in affairs of religion (*De Superstitione* 166c). Instead fearful images are created that generate horrible fantasies, and this leads to bizarre and extreme behavior. Superstition manifests itself in rites and taboos, consultations with sorcerers, charms and spells, and unintelligible language in prayers addressed to the gods.

The only antidote to such thought and activity is rational inquiry and teaching. Religion is legitimate for Plutarch only if it is rational and assists one in leading a good life. That is to say, the supreme object of human life is likeness to god, not irrational conformity with nature (*De Sera* 550dff.). This doctrine allows Plutarch to define the virtues and propose an ethical theory of religion, and it is within this specific didactic context that we encounter Plutarch's views of the Jews and their religion.

Plutarch[20] focuses on the dietary habits of the Jews, which give him an opening to comment on Jewish religious beliefs and practices in general. His most extensive treatment of food practices is found in *Quaestiones Convivales*, where the topic arises, not surprisingly, at a symposium held at Aidepsos in Euboea. Interest here is largely limited to the dietary norms of various sects. These include Pythagorean abstention from fish (*QC* VIII, 8), Egyptian priestly avoidance of salt (V, 10:1), and the Jewish prohibition against eating pork (V, 1–2), mentioned in the course of a conversation between Symmachus, an advocate of seafood, and Lamprias, Plutarch's brother. This leads to a discussion on whether this is done because the Jews honor the pig for its role in the history of agriculture or whether they irrationally abhor it. Callistratus suggests that the Jews honor swine, as they do the ass,

which helped them find water during their sojourn in the desert. Lamprias objects and claims that the Jews' abstention from pork arises from a fear of leprosy, a disease associated with this food. Furthermore, the pig is filthy, its living quarters are disgusting, and, in myth, Adonis or Dionysus was killed by a boar. This is why the Jews refuse to eat it.

At this point Plutarch, attempting to understand this aspect of the Jewish cult philosophically, suggests that there is a solid logic behind Jewish dietary practices and a connection between the religions of Jews and Greeks. This tendency continues throughout the rest of the dialogue. Lamprias' suggestion is followed up by Moiragenes, the Athenian, who established links between the Dionysian and Jewish cults. These are centered around the Feast of Tabernacles and the Sabbath. After all, he suggests, many people call the Bacci "Sabboi," the dress worn by the High Priest resembles Dionysian cultic grab, and the sounding of trumpets during nocturnal celebrations sounds like Dionysiac revelry.

The Jews are also mentioned in one of Plutarch's earlier essays, *De Superstitione.* Here the picture is less complementary. The keeping of the Sabbath is listed among the many barbarian customs adopted by the Greeks (*De Superst.* 166a), and it is noted that Jewish inaction on the Sabbath brought disaster upon Jerusalem (169c). Plutarch accordingly deems Judaism a superstitious religion (166a, 169c). In the first and second centuries B.C.E./C.E. this view of Jewish military behavior had become commonplace (Josephus, *Contra Apionem* 1.205–211).

In conclusion, we must be careful to define what Plutarch meant by this. Not all Jewish beliefs were viewed as superstitious, and he thought in general that, if understood rationally, many Greek, Roman, and Oriental rites were comprehensible and beneficial. In this context, even Jewish dietary and cultic norms are represented as admirable. Only a few Jewish customs, such as Sabbath observance, appear irrational.

For Lucian (120–180 C.E.), by contrast, all religious rituals were worthless vestiges, maintained in an age that had forsaken reason. Except for a few ironical passages in which he depicts the gods as complaining of the new barbarian invaders of Olympus, Lucian held belief in any of the gods to be depravity and consigned philosophy and religion to the realm of the foolish. The *Hermotinus* argues that philosophy is unnecessary to sensible living; in the *Banquet* and the *Lover of Lies* the propositions of Platonists, Stoics, Aristotelians, and Pythagoreans are lampooned for their vacuity, while the philosophers are portrayed as greedy, sexually depraved, quarrelsome, and egocentric; and in *Philosophers for Sale*, with its jumble of contradictory theories, he makes fun of philosophy in the abstract. We thus see a change of mood taking place, with Lucian anticipating the negative attitudes of Celsus, Porphyry, and Julian towards new religions such as Judaism and Christianity.

Lucian criticized philosophy at the level at which it was most vulnerable in later antiquity, its inability to offer a straightforward explanation of the universe, explain the place of the species in the order of things, and propose a clear-cut program of ethical behavior. Philosophy thus was in danger of becoming a sub-form of rhetoric, in which the validity of its propositions could not be proven either by coherence or correspondence to any manifest truth. Later philosophers such as Porphyry were sensitive to this problem and, like Lucian, had little patience for sects that could not demonstrate the coherence of their propositions.

The reaction against irrationalism was pervasive among the intelligentsia of the second and third centuries, with broad social consequences. The Olympian cult illustrates this, for while, in the imperial era, it continued to have an official and symbolic significance, it was no more metaphysically persuasive than the Roman imperial cult or other Hellenistic cults. Lucian saw this and attempted to undermine the traditional religions by parodying them through reason.

Apuleius (second century C.E.) complements Lucian in two ways. He was born in the provinces, Madauros in Numidia, and was a satirist of contemporary religious movements including Judaism. In his *Apologia* he lists Moses and the magician Iohannes. Both were active in the wake of Zoroaster and Ostanes (*Apologia* 90). In his *Florida* he

characterizes the Egyptians as "eruditi" because of their association with the Egyptian Gymnosophists; Nabataeans, Parthians, Ituraeans, and Arabs merely by their dress; while Jews are stigmatized as "superstitiosi" (*Florida* 6). In *Metamorphoses* IX, 14, he tells a story of a miller's wife despised by the gods because she made a sacrilegious claim that there was only one God. Furthermore, in her devotion to this God she feigned empty rites, denounced everyone, deceived her husband, drank wine from dawn to dusk, and lived a life of lewdness.

These descriptions assist us in tracing anti-Jewish typologies in the early empire. Many are familiar from earlier sources, but a few are clearly Roman. These include a connection between the leaders of Judaism and those of other oriental religions. There is also a clear association of Judaism with monotheism. Such perspectives will be interpreted in a more subtle and positive way by the second century philosophers Galen and Numenius.

Galen (130–200 C.E.) authored some five hundred works on philosophy, religion, and comedy, but his main legacy is as a physician who wrote extensive works in anatomy and physiology. Additionally, by his day Judaism and Christianity had made an impact on Roman intellectuals, so that, like Pliny and Lucian, he became one of the earliest Roman witnesses to these religions.[21] He was, indeed, the first Hellenic author who defined these religions as schools and who approached their teachings as a philosophy. His curiosity helped prepare the way for both to be taken seriously in intellectual circles. Numenius, Celsus, Porphyry, and Julian could do no less than recognize what Galen wrought.

While none of them wrote separate treatises on Jews and Christians, they were mentioned in discussions of political and religious concerns. Here Galen offered something new. His criticisms of Jewish and Christian teachings appeared in his works *On the Usefulness of Parts of the Body* and *On the Pulse*.[22] He referred to Judaism and Christianity with the term "school" and characterized both as philosophies that demonstrate their propositions through appeals to faith and the authority of their teachers (3.3). Although Galen finds Jewish and Christian teachings incompatible with reason, nowhere does he make carping remarks about either.

Arguing that Archigenes' theory, to which his own *On the Pulse* responded, was devoid of careful investigation and sound reasoning, Galen claimed that these traits linked him with Jews and Christians (3.3), for each group lacks the capacity to provide a cogent demonstration for what it proposes. Hearing Archigenes thus is like listening to those in "the school (*diatribe*) of Moses and Christ and hearing talk of undemonstrated laws" (2.4). There are physicians "who practice medicine without scientific knowledge . . . who framed laws for the tribe of Israel, since it is his method in his books to write without offering proofs, saying 'God commanded, God spoke'" (*Anat. Hipp.* 3.4).

A familiar rationalist critique emerges. Galen notices these two religions not because they are intellectually novel or socially revolutionary but because they explain reality on the basis of undemonstrated arguments. The followers of Moses and Christ are rationally moribund; their sages do not meet the minimal criteria appropriate to philosophers, let alone physicians. We have, of course, seen this critique before in Lucian's parody of philosophers and the maxims of philosophical schools (*Vitarum Auctio* 2.449–511), which are criticized for their tendency to appeal to oracular tradition and personalities and not to reasoned investigation (*Hermotimus* 16, 27). Galen, by contrast, saw the value of philosophy, like the study of anatomy, physiology, and physics, in its providing rational demonstrations to support all claims (*De usu partium* 11.2.3, 11.5).

In his medical and philosophical investigations, Galen, later echoed by Celsus (*C. Cels.* 5.14) and Porphyry (see Macarius Magnes, *Apoc.* 4.2, 4.24), criticized the assumptions in Genesis that creation was an act of divine will and that God created a universe out of what did not already exist. Both teachings contradict Greek cosmological doctrine, which holds that the world-order and its designer follow perfectly rational principles according to nature and that the demiurge is non-anthropomorphic (see *Tim.* 28a-32c). Viewed from the perspective of Galen's demiurgic theology and

cosmology, the Mosaic theology and cosmogony are very primitive indeed, holding, as they do, that the universe and its creator are beyond the laws of nature and that God created the world at will. For Galen, the opinion of Moses is in error because it does not follow the right method in assessing nature or its creator; its views are beyond demonstration. The unreasoned character of the biblical religions particularly struck Galen and the thinkers that followed him. Christians in particular were viewed as dogmatic and uncritical in their thinking, unwilling to submit their teacher and teachings to critical examination.

Around 170 C.E., during the reign of Marcus Aurelius, a work against Christianity called *True Doctrine* appeared. Its author was Celsus, an unknown middle Platonic philosopher of the period. The writing did not survive the war of pamphlets between Hellenes and Christians in late antiquity and exists only in fragments as preserved by the Christian Origen in his *Contra Celsum* (Praef. 4).[23]

Celsus knew the writings of the Jews, the evangelists, and the early Church fathers. His assessment of the first was largely determined by his hostility towards the second. He argues against Judaism's historical messianism, religious anthropocentrism, philosophical creationism, and the low social status of its adherents. These Jewish characteristics, he argued, were passed on to the Christians with disastrous results. Anticipating Porphyry, he noted the Christians' arguments that they were the heirs to Judaism and the embarrassing fact that Jews had rejected these claims (*C. Cels.* 2.1, 2.4, 2.11, 2.28, 7.18).

The *True Doctrine* pullulates with a critique of Judaism, but especially of Christianity, on three broad fronts: political, social, and philosophical. Taking up a familiar criticism, its author viewed Christianity as a marginal political and social movement devoid of any rational principles for articulating a coherent ideological agenda (*C. Cels.* 3.17, 4.10). Christians thus are a gullible and credulous people who espouse a naive fideism and absolutely refuse to subject their teachings to reasoned analysis and lucid argumentation (1.9, 3.55, 5.61–6). This irrational character of Judaism and Christianity makes it impossible for any sensible person to place scriptural teachings within the boundaries of rational religion. To this criticism, Celsus adds that Christianity lacks a system of ancient custom and tradition (*C. Cels.* 1.28, 1.32, 1.41, 2.55), a malady from which Judaism was exempt. Christian tradition thus reflected a particularly irrational faith. Its beliefs were based on the transgression of the laws of Judaism and Hellenism.[24]

These accusations suggested a great and present danger. Celsus argued that the teachings of the Christians would lead to the abandonment of the emperor and the loss of an empire to "lawless and savage barbarians" (*C. Cels.* 8.68), to peoples against whom the emperor and Celsus himself were tenaciously fighting. Even as the Roman emperor and his legions fought wars from Gaul and Dacia to Syria and Parthia to preserve the *imperium Romanum*, Celsus attacked the enemy within to preserve *Romanitas*.

In this setting, the harmony of the world was conceived in political and intellectual terms, for it rested on a culture that was international. Rome was a universal empire under an absolute emperor. Even religion was brought into this universalistic perspective. To the claim that all men could be citizens of a unified empire was added the idea that their gods could be Roman deities as well. Even the gods of the remote regions of the Roman world were made equal to Jupiter Optimus Maximus.

While Jewish attitudes towards these developments remain unknown, past precedents suggest that many second century Jews would have concurred with them. Judaism met the criteria of an ancient religion with commendable *mores*. Jews were loyal to Rome and its emperor, and the Jewish God was seen as part of an almost cosmopolitan *theokrasia*. Among those who concurred with such an assessment were philosophers, who continued to regard Jews and Judaism highly. It is to these writers that we now turn.

Numenius of Apamea (second half of the second century C.E.) was a disciple of Pythagoras and Plato and a precursor of the Neoplatonists. He included Judaism among the oriental religions he most admired and found parallels between the teachings of his masters and the doctrines and rituals

of the Brahmans, Magi, Egyptians, and Jews. His praise of the Jews and Judaism echoes the early writers of the Hellenistic era. Indeed, his admiration for Moses is unequaled in the philosophical literature of Mediterranean antiquity. He says: "For what is Plato, but Moses speaking Attic?"[25] Although such sentiments were common in the Alexandrian Jewish philosophers Aristobulus and Philo and the Alexandrian Christian philosophers Clement and Origen, this claim is unprecedented in pagan philosophical literature.

Numenius' knowledge of Judaism included frequent use of both the Pentateuch and the Prophets, which he interpreted allegorically. He also knew of the apocryphal traditions about Moses, including the story of the contest between Moses and the Egyptian magicians (*De Bono*, cited in Origen, *C. Cels.* IV, 51, and Porphyry, *De Antro Nympharum* 10). Most important, Numenius described the Jewish God as the "father of all the gods," and said he was intolerant of all other gods (cited in Lydus, *De Mensibus* IV, 53, 199 [Wuensch]). Unlike Galen, and, later, Iamblichus, Julian, Syrianus, Proclus, and Simplicius, Numenius thus does not explicitly connect the Jewish God to the demiurge, the creator god of the physical universe.

In another vein Vettius Valens (second century C.E.) mentions Abraham as an astrological authority (*Anthologiae* I, 10; II, 28, 29 [Kroll]). Abraham's reputation as an astrologer may go back to Artapanus, who claimed that Abraham taught astrology to the Egyptian king Pharethotes and the Phoenicians (Eusebius, *PE* IX, 18:1, 2). The prominence of Abraham as an astrologer is also reflected in the later work of Firmicus Maternus (first half of the fourth century C.E.). Firmicus also mentions Abram four times as an astrological authority. Indeed, he is placed among the best-known astrological writers Petosiris, Nechepso, and Critodemus. Moreover, in a surprising turn, Abram is connected with Orpheus.

Finally, the apologetic work *Cohoatio ad Gentiles* (second half of the third century C.E.?) claims that some very ancient Athenian writers—Hellanicus (fifth century B.C.E.) and Philochorus (fourth to third centuries B.C.E.)—referred to Moses' antiquity. He replaces the Egyptian king and legislator Mneus. In addition, we are told that Greek thought and literature are dependent upon Jewish sources, and quotes from Orpheus and Sophocles are adduced as written by Jews (Ps-Iustinus, *Cohoratio ad Gen.* 9). All this is apologetic invention, but it testifies to continued attempts to link Moses and the Jews to Greek origins in the third century C.E.

These testimonies link positive assessments of the Jews and Judaism in the philosophical, scientific, and historical traditions between Numenius and Valens. Clearly, by the end of the second century onwards, pagan thinkers held Moses, Abraham, and the teachings of the Jews in the highest esteem.

Later Platonism (220–550 C.E.)

Our next thinker, Porphyry, drew deeply from Plotinus, an important Platonist who himself wrote nothing on Jews or Judaism.[26] Plotinus' standard for judging the efficacy of a religion was knowledge, tradition, and custom: the *logos* and *nomos* that had been handed down from antiquity and from the gods. In his day, certain thinkers, like the Gnostics, held profane what the Platonists thought sacred and thus were held to turn people away from "true" devotion to the one high god. Plotinus was convinced that if such associations attracted too many adherents, they could disrupt the cohesion and stability of the *politeia*. These were the values that stood behind Porphyry's defense of Judaism and attack on Christianity.

In the last moments of his life (c. 232–310 C.E.), Porphyry finished a project that had occupied him for much of his over seventy years, a study of the religions of the Roman Empire, including Judaism and Christianity, contained in his *Philosophy from Oracles, Sentences*, and the lost work *Against the Christians*. Early in his life he was sympathetically disposed to the new movements and their teachers, Moses and Jesus. At the end, he maintained his respect only for Judaism (see *Epistula ad Marcell*).

The fragments remaining from *Against the Christians* suggest that Porphyry devoted a major part of the work to the Jewish scrip-

tures, including the historical problem of the date of Moses (see Theodoret of Cyrus, *Affect.* VII, 36) and the vulgarities explicit in the book of Hosea, whom God commanded to marry a whore (see Jerome, *Comm. in Osee* 12). Most important, however, he attacked the historical credibility of the book of Daniel, the sixth century dating of which was central in Christian presentations of history from the beginning of time. Porphyry's goal was to destroy the claim that Daniel prophecized the birth of Christ, the final destruction of the Jewish Temple, and the coming of the anti-Christ. Based on detailed historical proofs culled from Greco-Roman chronology, he claimed that Daniel was pseudepigraphal, not a prophecy about the coming of the Christian messiah at all but about the Maccabean revolt.

Whatever Porphyry may have thought about the Christians, we know in no uncertain terms what later Christians thought of him. Until the end of Mediterranean antiquity *Against the Christians* was not merely feared by Christian bishops, it was burned by Christian emperors. As a result Christian Rome gave Porphyry a prominence he could never have imagined possible. Alongside emperors remembered for their cruelty towards the faith, Porphyry was disliked by Christians as much as the "spine-chilling" Julian.

Part of this judgment likely rested on the fact that Porphyry was a proponent of Judaism. For this Neoplatonist, the Jews' history marked them as pious to an ancestral god, loyal to a cultural tradition, and as bearers of a religion that is philosophical in thought and ethical in behavior. In describing the Essene, his ideal example of the Jew who practices Judaism, he pictures the most sublime example of the virtues of *Romanitas* (*De Abstinentia* 4.11–14). By the dawn of the fourth century, Jews and Judaism thus had become a model people practicing an exemplary religion. The Essene had become for the Neoplatonist a quintessential Roman: loyal, courageous, intelligent, and pious.

Pagan philosophers after Porphyry were strangely silent about Jews and Judaism. Iamblichus (third century C.E.) says only that the God honored by the Hebrews is the demiurge.[27] Sallustius (fourth century C.E.) notes that circumcision was the most characteristic Jewish national custom.[28] From Lactantius and Eusebius we know of the anti-Christian polemicist Hierocles (beginning of the fourth century C.E.), whose work reflects the views of Jews and Christians held by Celsus, Porphyry, and, later, Julian. Hierocles wrote the *Philalethes*, a blistering attack against the Christian Bible and claims made about Jesus by his followers. Eusebius' reply to Hierocles confined itself to the negative comparison he drew between Apollonius of Tyana and Jesus (*PG* XXII, cols. 795ff.). Lactantius also refers to Hierocles' portrait of Christus: "after he had been put to flight by the Jews, he collected a gang of nine hundred men and committed robberies" (Hierocles, *Philalethes*, cited in Lactantius, *Divinae Institutiones* V, 3:4).

Julian (331–363 C.E.), who lived in a divided world, had much to say about both Jews and Christians. While the emperors had been Christian since Constantine's conversion in 313 C.E., the Roman Empire was not yet a Christian state or society. It thus came as a shock to Christians when the young son of Julius Constantius, who was raised a Christian and was a lector in the Church, upon assuming the purple, disowned Christianity, embraced the gods of pagan Rome, and commenced a systematic attack upon the Christian movement.[29]

As was the case with Celsus and Porphyry, Julian's attitude towards the Jews was conditioned by his hostility towards Christianity and admiration for Hellenism. Julian saw in the Jewish scriptures an *atheotes* that advocated exclusivity and was hostile to other religions and their gods (*Con. Gal.* 42e–43b). But he also saw positive elements, such as the truth of their myths (93d), their ancestral customs (238c), and their devotion to ritual practices (354ab).

In brief, Julian held that Jewish teachings and cult activities fell below those of Homer, Hesiod, and Plato (100c). He thought the Jews superior to "the Galilean sect" but inferior to the Hellenes. Jewish theology, eschatological teachings, and prophecy were flawed. Jews think that "all is possible with God," not realizing that God cannot do what is contrary to nature (*Con. Gal.* 96c).

God cares not only for the Jews, as Moses claimed, since Egyptians, Chaldeans, and Assyrians also have wise priestly teachers (176ab). Moreover, the Hebrews developed no science, philosophy, or civilization as the did the Greeks. Thus they are an inferior people (178a–184b).

Julian also explains a number of fundamental misconceptions held by Jews and Christians. Jews identify their God with the supreme God worshipped by all when he is only a national or tribal deity (*Con. Gal.* 100c). All peoples had regional gods, Julian argued in typical neoplatonic fashion, but this deity is not the God of all known to all humankind (52b). This is because God does not reveal himself to a particular nation or group, such as in Judea through the prophets or Jesus (141c; 106d). Jews and Christians also anthropomorphize the high God, which Julian finds preposterous (155c; 160d). Finally, Jews' and Christians' creation account is deficient, speaking about the creation of the physical world while neglecting the angels and other spiritual beings (*Con. Gal.* 99e).

Among the positive aspects of Judaism, Julian declared that the Jews carefully observed their ancestral laws, taken by Neoplatonists such as Julian as the greatest sign of their piety (*Con. Gal.* 238ac). In this sense they were viewed as superior even to the Greeks, who had become indifferent to their laws. Julian was aware of the Jewish Temple and priests, whom he viewed as holy men skilled in theurgy, as were Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Solomon (354ab–356c). Such facts were of great importance to Julian, who saw theurgy as a practical means to maintain contact with the gods. This suggested that Hellenes and Jews could work together to shift the divine balance in favor of their common religious and political goals.

If Julian's attitude towards Jews and Judaism was ambivalent, this was only because he believed that Judaism had declined as a religion and society. Judaism's acme had been in the period from creation through the time of the first Temple. But beginning with Moses, who obfuscated the original revelation, and through the period of the prophets, whose confusion eventually led to the emergence of the Galileans, or Christians, Judaism has been largely in decline (*Con. Gal.* 176ab–210a; 218a–224e; 238d–351d).

Since Constantine, Judaism and Hellenism had suffered dearly, and Julian, now emperor, offered both Jews and Hellenes a way out of their misfortune (*Fragmentum Epistulae* 89b, 289c–301b). He viewed the Jews as co-religionists whose ancient law was perfectly legitimate. He planned to rebuild the Jewish Temple to return integrity to an *ethnos* within the empire and to challenge Christian claims to Israel and Jerusalem (see Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae* XXIII, 1:2–3). This initiative was fully consistent with his efforts to restore the offering of sacrifices and to rebuild temples throughout the empire. Julian thought that by rebuilding the Jerusalem Temple, he literally was bringing the divine to earth, inviting the God of the Jews to dwell among the people once again. Additionally, he had a political motive, to bring the Jews of the Roman east, Mesopotamia, and Babylonia over to his side in his war against the Persians. According to Christian sources, the Jews eagerly responded to Julian's call (see, e.g., Gregory Nazianzenus, V, 4 [*PG* XXXV, col. 668]). But disaster followed. The rebuilding of the Temple ended with an earthquake, Julian was killed in Persia, and this final "pagan" revival came to an end.

The conflict between pagan philosophy and Christianity began in the second century with Celsus and ended in the fourth century with Julian. Apart from its harshness towards Christianity, this polemic carried with it pagan philosophers' increasing admiration for Judaism. With the death of Julian and the consolidation of a Holy Roman Empire, pagan references to Jews and Judaism became less frequent but no less admiring. This is evident in a number of later ancient sources.

Libanius of Antioch, rhetor and teacher of Julian, had many opportunities to meet Jews and had relationships with the Jewish patriarch in Rome and the Jewish community at Antioch. Yoked together under Christian emperors and bishops, Libanius exhibited deep respect for their character and well-being (*Epistulae* 914; 917; 974; 1084; 1097; 1105; 1251).

Damascius of Damascus (first half of the sixth century C.E.), student of Proclus, belonged to the last of the Hellenes who left for Persia after Justinian's closing of the academy at Athens. His *Life of Isidorus*, preserved through Photius and the Suida, includes some allusions to the power of the Jewish God and to the part played by individual Jews in contemporary neoplatonic circles. The God of the Hebrews remains efficacious for magical incantations; and we hear of two Jews who practiced medicine, Domninus of Syria and Gesius of Petra, of another Jew, Zeno of Alexandria, who belonged to the same circles, and of the Samaritan Marinus, who was a philosopher (see Damascius, *Vita Isidori*, cited in Photius, *Bibliotheca* cod. 242, 339a; Suida, s.v., *Gesios*; and Photius, *Bibliotheca* 345b). Zeno, Marinus, and Domninus all left their ancestral religions. Zeno openly attacked Judaism, Domninus no longer followed its precepts, and Marinus left Samaritanism because it had changed from the original religion of "Abramos." Damascius showed respect for their apostasy from Judaism and Samaritanism.

As pagan philosophy came to closure in the Latin West and Greek East, a scholiast and philosopher found occasions to discuss the highest God. Their comments on Jewish conceptions of God are reminiscent of earlier Hellenistic praise of the sublimity of Judaism. Lactantius Placidus (sixth century C.E.) identified the "summus deus" with the demiurge, a claim made about the Jewish God by pagan philosophers from Galen to Proclus. He suggests that the Persian Magi were correct when they claimed that apart from gods worshipped in temples there is a superior god who rules over all others, like the sun and moon. The name of this god is not known to mankind, Lactantius argued. Only his virtues and powers are known, and they are diffused throughout the world. These powers are worshipped and called by many names. To substantiate his claim of the existence of anunknown ineffable deity who has control over the world, nature, and the many gods worshipped by humankind, Lactantius invokes the authority of the Magi, Orpheus, Moses, and Esaias (*Commentarri in Statii Thebaida* IV, 516).

Simplicius (first half of the sixth century C.E.), the last neoplatonic commentator *par excellence*, wrote a polemic against the Christian neoaristotelian philosopher Philoponus. Philoponus denied the divinity of the heavenly bodies and declared the imminent destruction of the world. Simplicius used the Psalms of David to show that even David contradicts the Christian philosopher's views. The celestial bodies are implicitly connected with God (*Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca* VII, 90), and the Christian view of the end of the world runs counter to David's assertion that the "heaven and sun are eternal" (VII, 141f.).

Conclusion

According to Hegel, "the owl of Minerva spreads its wings only with the falling of the dusk.[30] But Minerva's owl—philosophy—played a morning role also in antiquity, preceding as well as following social and political theory. The ancient philosophers mark out an important epoch in understandings of Jews and Judaism. For their age, these thinkers were crucially important articulators of utopian and dystopian views of the "other." Their assumptions not only became deeply rooted in the intellectual life of their time but also voiced in compelling form notions that framed Christian views of the Jews and Judaism—perspectives that still haunt us.

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Notes

[1] For a collection of pagan sources on the Jews and Judaism, see M. Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism*, 3 vols. (Jerusalem, 1976). The major studies on this topic are I. Heinemann, "The Attitude of the Ancient World Toward Judaism," in *Review of Religion* 4 [1940], pp. 385–400; A. Momigliano, *Alien Wisdom* (Cambridge, 1975); V. Tcherikover, *Hellenistic Civilization and the Jews* (New York, 1977), and M. Hengel, *Hellenistic Civilization and the Jews* (New York, 1979).

[2] On the authenticity of this passage, see Momigliano, op. cit., p. 77.

[3] On these matters, see Numenius, cited in Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* I, 22:150:4; Theophrastus, cited in Porphyry, *De Abs.* 11, 26; Clearchus, cited in Josephus, *C. Ap.* I.176, 179; and Philo, *Leg. Alleg.* 1.108.

[4] See Josephus, *C. Ap.* I.179. Scholars are divided on the authenticity of this report. Schürer and Bickermann acknowledge its trustworthi-ness, while Willrich, Schubart, and Tcherikover deny it.

[5] Megasthenes visited India and spent some time there between 302 and 288 B.C.E. See A. Dahlquist, *Megasthenes and Indian Religion* (Stockholm, Goeteborg, Uppsala, 1962).

[6] The reports of Hecataeus on our topic are in the *Aegyptiaca*, cited in Diodorus Siculus, *Bibliotheca Historica* XL, 3; *De Iudaeis*, cited in Josephus, *C. Ap.* I, 183–204; II, 43.

[7] For an overview, see Tcherikover, *Hellenistic Civilization and the Jews*, pp. 361ff.

[8] See Diodorus Siculus, *Bibliotheca Historica*, Dindorf XXXIV, 1:1; Lysimachus, cited in Josephus, *C. Ap*, I, 309, and Philostratus, *Vita Apollonii* V, 33–34.

[9] See R. Walzer, *Galen on Jews and Christians* (Oxford, 1949), p. 22.

[10] *De Regno*, cited in Stobaeus, IV, 6:22, in Thesleff, *The Pythagorean Texts of the Hellenistic Period* (Abo, 1965), p. 79. On the following, see ibid., IV, 7:64 and Thesleff, pp. 79ff.

[11] See A.H.M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire* (London, 1986), vol. 2, pp. 948–949, critiqued by Bernard Bachrach, "The Jewish Community of the Later Roman Empire," in Jacob Neusner, ed., *To See Ourselves as Others See Us* (Atlanta, 1985), pp. 402–408.

[12] For Varro's theology, see P. Boyance, *REA* LVII [1955], pp. 57ff. On his connection with neo-Pythagorean philosophers, see W. Aly, *Strabon von Amaseia* (Bonn, 1957), pp. 200f.

[13] For the most detailed study, see J. Lewy, *Studies in Jewish Hellenism* (Jerusalem, 1960), pp. 79ff. Lewy notes that, in 59 B.C.E., the Jewish multitudes in the *contiones* were on the side of Cicero's enemies, the Populares. This only added fuel to the rhetors fire.

[14] Against Tcherikover, *Hellenistic Civilization and the Jews*, p. 364.

[15] *De Prov. Consul* V:10. This charge probably derived from the large number of Jewish slaves brought to Rome by Pompey. See Philo, *Legatio ad Gaium* 155. For the relations between Gabinius and the publicani, see Cicero, *Ad Quintum Fratrem* III, 2:2.

[16] He attacked the followers of Isis and Cybele in the *De Vita Beata* 26:8; and the *galli* of Cybele in the *De Superstitione* (see Augustine, *Civ. Dei* VI, 10).

[17] For *De Superstitione*, see Turcan, op. cit., pp. 12ff.; for *Naturales Quaestiones* and *Epistulae Morales*,

see K. Abel, *Bauformen in Senecas Dialogen* (Heidelberg, 1967), pp. 165ff.

[18] See F.E. Brenk, *In Mist Apparelled: Religious Themes in Plutarch's "Moralia" and "Lives"* (Leiden, 1977). For a study Plutarch's career, see D.A. Russell, *Plutarch* (London, 1972); on Plutarch as philosopher, J. Dillon, *The Middle Platonists* (Ithaca, 1974).

[19] See Dillon, *The Middle Platonists*, pp. 199–225.

[20] The most elaborate treatment of Judaism is in the *Quaestiones Conviviales*, 4.4.4–6. For a complete collection of Plutarch's references to Jews and Judaism, see Stern, op. cit., pp. 545–562.

[21] On Galen, see L. Edelstein, *Ancient Medicine* (Baltimore, 1987) and M. Frede, *Essays in Ancient Philosophy* (Minneapolis, 1987), pp. 279–300. For Galen's on Jews and Christians, see Stern, op. cit., pp. 306–328, R. Walzer, *Galen on Jews and Christians* (London, 1949), and R. Wilken, *The Christians as the Romans Saw Them*, pp. 68–93.

[22] There are also two Arabic passages, from Galen's lost work on Hippocrates's *Anatomy* and his work against the theology of Aristotle. Both mention that Jews do not offer proofs for their teachings. See Walzer, op. cit., pp. 24–37. The texts can be found on pp. 10–16.

[23] See Stern, op. cit., pp. 224–231, 293–305.

[24] See Wilken, op. cit., pp. 117–125.

[25] Cited, e.g., in Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* I, 22:150:4.

[26] See R.M. Berchman, "Rationality and Ritual in Plotinus and Porphyry," in *Incognita* 2.2 (1991).

[27] Cf., Iamblichus, cited in Lydus, *De Mensibus*, IV, 53 [Wuensch]. Following Stern, op. cit., II, pp. 484–485, it seems unlikely that Iamblichus' two passages in *De Mysteriis* II, 3; VII, 4 [des Places] on angels, archangels, and the Assyrians refer to the Jews.

[28] See Sallustius Neoplatonicus, *De Deis et Mundo* IX, 5 [Rochefort]. On Sallustius, see A.D. Nock, *Sallustius—Concerning the Gods and the Universe* (Cambridge, 1926), pp. xlff.

[29] On Julian's reign and attitude towards Jews and Christians, see Wilken, op. cit., pp. 164–196.

[30] Hegel, *Philosophy of Right* (Clarendon Press, 1952), p. 13.

Parents, Honor of in Judaism

Four short normative texts relevant to our discussion appear in the Torah: "Honor your father and your mother" (Exod. 20:12; Deut. 5:16); "Every one of you shall revere his mother and his father" (Lev. 19:3); "He who curses his father or his mother shall be put to death" (Exod. 21:17; see Lev. 20:9); and "He who strikes his father or his mother shall be put to death" (Exod. 21:15). Despite the texts' dispersion throughout the Torah, they seemingly make a similar point, that honoring one's parents consists of reverence, and this reverence is derived from honor. Consequently, cursing that detracts from the honor and reverence of one's parents is forbidden, and striking them is certainly prohibited. Interestingly, every Israelite is similarly commanded to honor, revere, and not to curse the Lord. Thus we find: "Honor the Lord with your wealth" (Prov. 3:9);[1] "You must revere the Lord your God" (Deut. 10:20); and "Whoever curses his God shall bear his sin" (Lev. 24:15).

The norms of honoring and revering one's parents, of not cursing them, and the punishing of the child who strikes them all have a common basis, the necessity of imposing parental authority upon sons and daughters.[2] This is just as the commandments to honor the Lord, to revere him, and not to curse him all originate in the biblical ideal of the believer's submission before the omnipotent Lord. Consequently, according to this worldview, the honor due one's parents and obedience to them does not serve the egotistical interest of the minor and his welfare (that present-day legal systems term "the good of the child"), just as, in the eyes of Judaism, the obligation of *Qiddush Hashem* (sanctifying the divine name) and the obligation of honoring the Lord were not intended specifically to benefit believers. And in the same manner that the individual must believe in God and adhere to his ways, "even if he takes away your soul,"[3] and is not permitted to flee from his obligations to honor him, revere him, and refrain from cursing him, since "his presence fills all the earth" (Is. 6:3), he is not free to evade the honor and reverence of his parents nor to curse or strike them, even if they patently do not have his good in mind.

This equation of a person's obligations to God and to his parents has been discussed by Jewish religious authorities throughout the ages. Of special interest is the question, just what is the meaning of

"honoring one's father and mother"? Is this in accordance with an objective criterion, just as every believer honors God as mandated by the halakhah and its fixed ritual, or does this correspond to the parents' own subjective judgment of what constitutes honor? And, as a general rule, since the parents are subordinate to God, is the child permitted not to honor them if they are, for instance, Sabbath violators, *mumarim le-tayavon* (rebels against Jewish law on account of an irresistible appetite), or *mumarim le-hakhis* (rebels in a spirit of defiance), even if they do not tell their children to do anything counter to Judaism? Or, possibly, are the children obligated to honor them and do as they wish only when they do not seek to reject the observance of any commandment? Tannaitic sources, further, define honoring one's parents as providing them "food, drink, and a clean garment" (B. Qid. 32a; Y. Pe. 1:1). This gives rise to the question of whether or not children are obligated to maintain parents from their own resources, and to what extent. Does the obligation to honor one's parents more than other people, including oneself, require a son, for instance, to maintain them even if he does not have the means to provide for his wife and minor children? In the following, we deal with these several issues on the basis of Judaism's halakhic sources.

Is the Obligation of Honoring One's Parents Enforceable?

A tannaitic statement cited at B. Hul. 110b and 142a (a textual variant appears at Y. B.B. 5:5) teaches: "Every positive commandment that bears its reward by its side does not fall within the jurisdiction of the earthly court." According to the Talmuds, the commandments that "bear their reward by their side" are: the commandment of honoring one's parents (B. Hul. 110b), regarding which Scripture states: "that you may long endure, and that you may fare well, in the land that the Lord your God is giving you" (Deut. 5:16; see also Exod. 20:11); the commandment of letting the mother bird go from the nest (B. Hul. 142a), as the verse mandates: "Let the mother go, and take only the young, in order that you may fare well and have a long life" (Deut. 22:7); and the commandment to measure and weigh (Y. B.B. 5:5) with "completely honest weights and completely honest measures, if you are to endure long on the soil that the Lord your God is giving you" (Deut. 25:15).

Other commandments deemed by the Rabbinic literature to bear their reward by their side, and whose observance cannot be enforced by the court, are: the returning of a pledge,[4] as it is written: "you must return the pledge to him at sundown, that he may sleep in his cloth and bless you; and it will be to your merit before the Lord your God" (Deut. 24:13); and the commandment of charity, as it is said: "Give to him readily and have no regrets when you do so, for in return the Lord your God will bless you in all your efforts and in all your undertakings" (Deut. 15:10). Notwithstanding this, regarding the commandment of *mezuzah*, concerning which it is said: "to the end that you and your children may endure, in the land . . ., as long as there is a heaven over the earth" (Deut. 11:21), *Minhat Hinukh* states "that we have never heard nor seen in the decisors of Jewish law that *mezuzah* is not enforced because it bears its reward by its side."[5]

The Talmuds themselves do not explain the absence of an obligation to compel the recalcitrant to observe these commandments. Rashi, however, argues[6] that "bearing its reward" means that "if you do not observe it, this is its punishment, that you shall not take this reward." It would seem, according to his interpretation, that the court or any individual in Israel is enjoined from enforcing the observance of these commandments.

The Tosafists, however, question how, if it is so that a positive commandment that "bears its reward by its side" is not enforced, we find at B. B.B. 8b that Rabbah "compelled Rav Nathan b. Ammi to give four hundred *zuz* to charity"?[7] Several answers appear in the name of the Tosafists.[8] The first of two resolutions offered in the name of Rabbenu Tam holds that the incident involved only compulsion through words and not any court action. This understanding

was rejected by medieval authorities as based on an unreasonable assumption.[9] The second answer in Rabbenu Tam's name asserts that the compulsion was by the charity official and so was acceptable. This answer seems forced, since it limits the compulsive ability of most townspeople. Another answer is cited in the name of Rabbenu Isaac of Dampiere: "As regards charity, compulsion is applied, because it is written concerning it: 'do not harden your heart and shut your hand' (Deut. 15:7)." This answer seems equally unconvincing, since the other commandments in this category similarly are enjoined by Scripture and yet are not subject to compulsion. A different answer is offered in the name of Isaac ben Abraham (*Rizba*):

> Here, the court is not enjoined concerning a commandment that bears its reward by its side, that is, punishment is not delivered. . . . This means you are not enjoined to compel him until he complies, as [you are enjoined] regarding other positive commandments; for if one is told, "Perform [the commandment of] *sukkah* and the *lulav* [i.e., the taking of the Four Species on Sukkot]," and he does not do so, he is lashed until he expires.

This interpretation requires further explanation. *Rizba*, in contrast with Rashi, holds there is nothing preventing the court from enforcing the observance of a positive commandment "that bears its reward by its side." In this, it is like the other positive commandments in the Torah. But, according to him, as regards a positive commandment "that bears its reward by its side," the application of compulsive authority is at the court's discretion; the court is not obligated to use this authority, as it is in the case of other positive commandments. We must, therefore, examine why the court is not enjoined to punish one who refrains from giving charity, as it is mandated to compel one who refrains from performing other positive commandments.

Study of other commandments that bear their reward by their side reveals arguments both favoring and opposing the obligation to compel their performance. Thus, B. Hul. 10a-b relates that the commandment of honoring one's parents is a positive commandment "that bears its reward by its side," so that when a man was brought in to the court for not honoring his parents and bound up to be whipped, Hisda instructed the court to let him go. Y. Pe. 1:1, on the other hand, cites different traditions in the name of Yannai and Jonathan that a son is forced to support his father,[10] and Yose of the school of Bun states there: "Would that every tradition were as clear to me as this one, that the son is compelled to support his father." And supporting one's father is included in the commandment of honoring him.

When is a "Positive Commandment that Bears its Reward by its Side" not Enforced?

Several of the later authorities have discussed the inconsistency between the absolute rule that exempts the court from enforcing any "positive commandment that bears its reward by its side," on the one hand, and, on the other, the detailed halakhot that indicate the frequency with which the recalcitrant individual was in fact compelled. While they resolved these seemingly contradictory texts in various ways,[11] it appears, in our opinion, that the exemption from enforcing these commandments is not freestanding but, rather, ensues from the nature of the commandments themselves, which differs from that of the other positive commandments in the Torah. This is insofar as the scope of the obligation to honor one's parents or to send the mother bird from its young cannot be objectively assessed and varies from one individual to another, in accordance with the circumstances. It thus is at the discretion of the one performing the commandment.

Thus, regarding the commandment of honoring one's parents, defined in the sources as a "most stringent" commandment,[12] Y. Pe. 1:1 (with a textual variation at B. Qid. 31a-b) elaborates:

> There are some instances in which a person feeds his father fat [chickens] but is destined for Gehenna, and there are other instances in which he yokes him to a millstone but is destined for heaven. How so? A person would feed his father fattened

> chickens. Once his father asked him: "My son, where did you get these [fine ones]?" He replied, "Old one, old one, eat and care not, for dogs eat and care not." Consequently, he feeds his father fattened [chickens], but is destined for Gehenna. . . . Another person was grinding in a mill, when an order came to grind [at the royal mill]. [The son] said [to his father]: "Father, assume the yoke of the milling in my place. [Thus], should we [at the royal mill] come to be dishonored], it would be better that I, and not you, [be so disgraced]." . . . Consequently, he yokes him to a millstone but is destined for heaven.

Fulfillment of the commandment of honoring one's parents thus depends in great measure on intentions and attitudes rather than actions. It consequently is not *incumbent* upon the court to determine who has violated the law and to punish that person. When, however, it is clear to the court, by objective criteria, that a violation has occurred, for example, if a father demands food and a son does not support him, the court is mandated to compel the son to provide for his father.[13]

The same applies to the sending of a bird forth from the nest, which the Talmuds deem an "extremely minor" commandment (Y. Pe. 1:1, M. Hul. 12:5). One who refuses to send a mother bird forth is not compelled, for at any moment he could change his mind and do so. If, however, he slaughtered the mother without sending her forth, he has transgressed the negative commandment "do not take the mother together with her young," and he is punished with lashes, like all who transgress such a prohibition (M. Hul. 12:4; B. Hul. 141b). Accordingly, if a person neither sent the mother from the nest nor slaughtered her, the court is not enjoined to punish him with lashes. If, however, a person finds a birds' nest and patently refrains from observing the commandment according to its plain intent, for example, if he tears off the bird's wings so that it cannot fly away even if he were later to send it forth, this, according to Judah, is sufficient reason to administer lashes and order him to wait until the mother's feathers grow back so that he can send her away.[14]

The commandment of proper measures and weights is similar. The Amoraim distinguished between measures that are fixed and known to all and measures that change from one day to the next, in accordance with conditions in the marketplace. An official must be appointed over the former, to supervise and enforce their correct maintenance. But the latter cannot be so enforced, and so the court is not obliged to attempt to do so.[15]

The Commandment of Honoring One's Parents According to their Subjective Judgment

"Honoring," as defined by Jewish law, is "feeding and giving drink, clothing and covering, bringing in and taking out," while "fear" is "not to stand in his place, not to sit in his place, not to contradict his words, nor tip the scales against him" (B. Qid. 32a; Y. Pe. 1:1). The Talmuds stress the subjective nature of these obligations, insofar as honoring and fearing might include compliance with strange demand that accord with parents' subjective judgment. Thus the Talmud asks: "Has [the father] then thrown a purse before you into the sea without your shaming him" (B. Qid. 32a; Y. Pe. 1:1); and the rabbis in B. Qid. 31a praise Dama son of Nethinah (a non-Jew, whose conduct towards his father the rabbis viewed as paradigmatic) who "was once wearing a silken cloak with gold embroidery and sitting among Roman nobles. His mother came, tore it off him, struck him on the head, and spat in his face, yet he did not shame her."[16] The Talmudic sources contain narratives that describe the subjective nature of the commandment to honor one's parents. Thus Y. Pe. 1:1 speaks of the mother of Ishmael, who complained that her son did not treat her with honor, since he did not allow her to wash his feet and then drink the water. His colleagues told Ishmael, "Since this is her desire, this is her honor."

Y. Pe. 1:1 also tells of non-Jews who observed the commandment of honoring parents to excess, such as a non-Jew from Ashkelon "who was the chief of the magistrates and never sat on the stone on which his father had sat. When his father died, he turned it into an object of veneration." This commandment of honoring one's parent was regarded by the Tannaim and

Amoraim as so individualistic that several Amoraim prided themselves on not having seen their parents, because they assumed that if they had seen them, they would never have been able to fully understand the latter's wishes, and therefore would have failed properly honor to them.[17] Needless to say, the obligation of honoring one's parents continues the entire life of the father and mother and, in certain respects, even after their death.[18] Only a married woman who "is not free to engage in this because others have authority over her" (T. Qid. 1:11; Y. Pe. 1:1) is exempt from the honor and fear due her parents. If, however, she is divorced or widowed, this obligation arises once again.[19]

From Whose Resources are Parents to be Maintained?

In B. Qid. 31b-32b the Amoraim discuss whether a father is to be given food and drink from his property or from that of his son. Proofs are provided for each position, and no decision is reached. One proofs cited is a *baraita*:

> It is said, "Honor your father and your mother" (Exod. 20:12), and it is said, "Honor the Lord with your wealth" (Prov. 3:9): just as the latter means at monetary loss, so, too, the former is at monetary loss. But if you were to say, "At the father's [expense]," what loss is there for him?

The Talmud rejects this objection, because there still is a loss for the son: "Lost [time from] work." In my opinion, however, a *baraita* at Y. Pe. 1:1 implies that the obligation to honor one's parents is to be filled specifically from the son's property:

> R. Simeon b. Yohai says: Great is honoring one's father and mother, for the Holy One, blessed be He, preferred it to his own honor, as it is said: "Honor your father and your mother," and it is said, "Honor the Lord with your wealth." With what do you honor him? With what he graciously endows you. One sets aside the gifts to the poor from one's field; one sets aside heave-offering, first tithe, second tithe, poor man's tithe, and dough-offering; he performs [the commandments of] *sukkah*, *lulav*, the [blowing of the] ram's horn [on Rosh Hashanah], *tefilin*, *tzitzit*, and feeds the poor and the hungry, and gives the thirsty to drink—if you have [the means], you are obligated for them all, and if you do not have, you are not obligated for any of them. When, however, one is confronted with honoring one's father and mother, whether you have wealth or whether you do not, "Honor your father and your mother," even if you must beg.

The early talmudic commentators, such as Yom Tov ben Abraham Ishbili in his novellae, and Asher ben Jehiel in his *Tosafot* and halakhic rulings, resolve the dictum of Simeon bar Yohai in other fashions, such as: "Not that he must give him of his money, and beg, rather, he honors him with his body [i.e., personally engages in this] at the expense of his work, thereby resulting in his having to beg." The forced nature of this explanation is obvious and is not consistent with the plain meaning of the passage in Y. Peah. We may also conclude from the silence of the Tosafists in Qiddushin and of Meir ben Isaac Arama in his commentary there, who cites this passage from Y. Peah without resolving it with the passage in B. Qiddushin, that these authorities did not see fit to resolve the dictum of Simeon bar Yohai in this manner.

If we follow the view of the Yerushalmi that a child is obligated to provide for a parent from the child's property, this obligation takes precedence over the maintenance of young children, for, according to the Yerushalmi, the obligation of sustaining the parents applies regardless of whether the child has wealth or not and must be fulfilled to the satisfaction of the parent; providing for small children, by contrast, accords with the ability of the provider: if he is wealthy, he must give in accordance with his abilities; if not, he need not beg. Even, however, halakhic authorities such as the author of *She'iltot* and several of the Tosafists[20] who follow the orientation of the Bavli and obligate a son to maintain his father "from that of the father" emphasize that, "if the father has no money and the son does," the son must provide for his parents from his own property, for the right of the father to receive charity from his son is not inferior to that of any other person.

A woman is exempt from honoring and fearing her parents if "others have authority over her," and this exemption includes supporting her father and mother. This is

because her husband's authority over her includes his ability to prevent her from giving her handiwork to her parents. This is similar to a married woman's exemption from providing for her children in any instance, even when their father has no resources or no interest in sustaining them. If she is not under the authority of others, however, a great difference separates the mother's obligation to provide for her children and to maintain her parents. While she remains exempt from providing for her sons and daughters, her obligation to honor and fear or parents again applies. She consequently must provide for her father and her mother, whether she has wealth or not, and even if she is required to beg.

Limitations on the Obligation to Honor One's Father and Mother

Understanding that the halakhah defines the obligation to honor one's parents as subjective, following the judgment of the parents, we can now explain the instances in which a son is not required to obey his parents. B. B.M. 32a raises this issue as follows:

> From where is it derived that if his father [who is of the priestly class] said to him [who accordingly also of priestly stock], "Defile yourself," or if he said to him, "Do not return [a lost article]," that he is not to heed them? As it is said, "You shall each revere his mother and his father, and keep my Sabbaths: I the Lord am your God" [Lev. 19:3]—you are all obligated to honor me.

The son is exempt from obeying his father's demand that he sin because the obligation to honor God through observance of all the commandments has priority. The same principle is the basis of the following (B. Qid. 32a), given in the name of Eleazar b. Mathia:

> If my father says, "Give me water to drink," but I have a commandment to fulfill, I set aside my father's honor and perform the commandment, for I and my father are both obligated to fulfill the commandments.

The point may also be derived from the distinction raised by Issi b. Judah in the same Talmudic discussion:

> If the commandment can be performed by others, then he lets the others perform it, while he engages in honoring his father. If, however, there are no others who could observe this commandment, then he engages in the commandment and sets aside his father's honor, for he and his father are both obligated to fulfill the commandments.

In other words, the son is obligated to set aside his father's honor and perform a commandment only if there is no one else to do it, for the father himself, in that situation, also would have been obligated to fulfill this commandment. The following hypothetical question of a widow's son is similarly resolved (B. Qid. 31a):

> If my father says, "Give me water to drink," and my mother says, "Give me water to drink," which of them takes precedence? [Rav Eliezer] replied: "Set aside the honor of your mother and fulfill the honor due your father, for both you and your mother are obligated to honor your father."

Several *Ahronim* conclude from this "that if his father told him to do for him a task that the wife is not obligated to perform for her husband . . . [and] his mother also told him to perform for her a task," then both are equal.[21] Similarly, if the parents divorce, so that the mother no longer has an obligation to honor the father, their son is free to prefer whichever one he chooses.[22]

Another case in which the question of a son's obligation to heed his parents arises if a pupil desires to move from home to study Torah elsewhere, against which his father protests, asserting that he will constantly worry about the son's being slandered by gentiles, a frequent occurrence in the land where the proposed teacher is.[23] Isserlein rules that the son is not obligated to heed his father, since the father himself, if he were certain that he would advance in his studies under a certain teacher, would be obligated to go to him and fulfill the commandment of Torah study (fig. 114). According to Isserlein, not only the obligation of Torah study but also "minor [prohibitions] supersede honoring and revering one's father and mother." Following this same logic, Joseph b. Solomon Colon rules[24] "that the father is not empowered to prevent

his son from marrying a woman whom the son desires," since marrying a woman one finds repulsive constitutes a transgression. Such a marriage is forbidden because it constitutes a disgraceful act, entails deception, and harms the standing of the woman; the father, as well, is forbidden to marry a woman whom he does not like.[25]

The Parent's Obligations to Children

A new interpretation of the commandment to honor one's parents appears in the rulings of the Rabbinical courts in the State of Israel. A son's failure to fulfill this obligation is liable to revoke his right to maintenance from the father. Such is the interpretation given the following law, as formulated by Maimonides:[26]

> After the age of six years, the father is entitled to state: "If he is with me, I will provide his maintenance; and if he is with his mother, I will not provide his maintenance."

The rule "a daughter is always with her mother" also was interpreted by the Rabbinical courts as conditional upon the daughter's observance of her father's honor (as expressed by his desire that she honor him and visit him from time to time).

The question was raised in case 1964/43 (Jerusalem), PDR 7:10, whether a father could be exempted from the maintenance of his thirteen-year-old son, who had left the Satmar Yeshivah against his father's wishes that he continue studying there, and, encouraged by his mother (who was divorced from the father), had transferred to the Ponevezh Yeshivah. The father argued that since the son did not heed him and did not want to continue in his specific practices, namely, the Hasidic method of study, in Yiddish, but rather desired to study in "the holy tongue" (i.e., Hebrew), then he is exempt from providing maintenance, following the principle of "If he is with me, I will provide his maintenance." For the purposes of the specific case, the maintenance that the father was required to pay consisted of the son's living expenses at the yeshivah and his tuition.

Mordecai Eliyahu, (the former Sephardic Chief Rabbi of Israel) ruled[27] that according to the law of honoring one's parents, the son is not obligated to heed his father, but rather may study Torah wherever he desires. The father in this case "cannot say to him: 'If you are not with me, then I will not provide your maintenance,' since the entire rationale [of this claim] is that [the son] does not want to heed him." The law, accordingly, is with the son: "it is incumbent upon the father to teach him Torah in a place and in a manner that he desires, and [the father] must aid and assist him in this. Consequently, the father must provide for him, maintain him, and fill his every need where he is studying."

In my view, Rabbi Eliyahu's decision breaks new ground and requires further study. The idea that the son is not obligated to heed his father and may study wherever he desires was stated only regarding the obligation of honoring one's parents. On what basis, however, can we conclude from Maimonides or other sources that this right of the son to refuse his father's wishes and not heed him also entails the right of the refusing son to be supported by the father? Furthermore, the obligation of the father to teach his son Torah does not consist specifically of hiring a teacher for him. Avraham Schapira, (the former Ashkenazic Chief Rabbi of Israel), who also sat on the panel of that Rabbinical court, was more reserved in his ruling:[28]

> Let us return to the argument of the father that since the son is not with him, [the father] is to be exempted from supporting him. According to the reasoning of *Helkat ha-Mehokek* in the opinion of Maimonides, that the father is right, since [the son] must be with him to study Torah, it should be said that this applies specifically to one who demands that [the son] be with him, but the son refuses. In the instance, however, in which both agree that [the son] will not live with the father but someplace else, since in this case there is no argument that [the father] desires to teach him Torah himself, the father is not necessarily exempt from providing maintenance.

We may therefore surmise that if the father in this case wanted to teach his son Torah himself, the court would not be empowered to obligate him to maintain his son, despite

the justified refusal of the son and his wish to study someplace else.[29]

Israeli Rabbinical courts similarly have reevaluated the rules for the maintenance of daughters. My view is that when Maimonides stated that "a daughter is always with her mother," he meant that the father intends to maintain his daughter (until the age of 12 1/2), even if she is in her mother's custody. He does not insist that the daughter be in his custody, since the handiwork of this daughter always belongs to him. Even the later *Rishonim*, however, who regarded this rule by Maimonides as referring to custody, limited their discussion to the rivalry between the mother and the husband's heirs or the administrators who were appointed by him before his death. Accordingly, the disagreement among the early *Ahronim*, whether the principle of "a daughter is always with her mother" is an inflexible and unchanging rule or whether it is a standard intended for the good of the daughter, in which case the heirs could argue that the daughter should be with them and not with her mother, does not relate to the right in principle of the father to deny his daughter maintenance payments if her conduct, when she is with her mother, is unsatisfactory to him.[30]

A new spirit, however, infuses the rulings of the Israeli Rabbinical courts, according to which the principle of "a daughter is always with her mother" does not prevent the court from considering the cancellation of maintenance payments to the daughter if she does not heed her father and does not desire to visit him. This interpretation was explained in various ways. Rabbi Ovadiah Yosef compares the case of this daughter to the ancient question of whether the mother is entitled to remove the daughter from the father's city and keep her away from the family of the wife's dead husband. He decides this on procedural grounds, based on the halakhic uncertainty of whether the mother is permitted to remove her daughter from the father's place. Rabbi Eliezer Judah Waldenberg, on the other hand, holds that we are to decide on the cancellation of the daughter's maintenance on the basis of the moral corruption of this daughter who does not want to meet her father. According to Waldenberg and other panels of Rabbinic judges, the daughter's refusal to visit her father constitutes moral corruption, because "even when the father is not religiously observant," he is to be honored.[31] I doubt whether this ruling would have been written in such a decisive manner if the court had been requested to rule on the question of the basic right to custody of a non-observant father, and not only on the issue of visiting rights.

ISRAEL ZVI GILAT

NOTES

[1] On this verse, see Tosafot to B. Ber. 32a, s.v., *Kabed*. I believe the subject of honor similarly stands behind the prohibition at Deut. 12:3–4.

[2] On the law in Scripture and the Ancient Near East, see J. Fleishman, *Parent and Child in the Ancient Near East and the Bible* (Jerusalem, 1999), pp. 200–243 (Hebrew).

[3] M. Ber. 9:5; B. Ber. 61b; Sifre Deut. 32 (ed. L. Finkelstein [New York and Jerusalem, 1993], p. 55).

[4] See *Teshuvot Rashba* (attributed to Nahmanides) 88; Shulhan Arukh, *Hoshen Mishpat* 97:16; *Sefer Me'irat Einayim*, *Hoshen Mishpat* 97:35–36; *Shakh* (Shabbetai ben Meir ha-Kohen), *Hoshen Mishpat* 97:10.

[5] Commandment 479 (photocopy edition, Israel, 1959), 60a.

[6] Rashi, B. Hul. 110b, s.v., *She-Matan Sekharah*. *Levush, Yoreh Deah* 240:5 provides a fuller explanation: "The rabbis, of blessed memory, accepted that any positive commandment regarding which it is written 'its reward is at its side,' the court is not enjoined to enforce. The logical reason is that since the Torah explicitly revealed the reward for this commandment, his action, and its accompanying reward or punishment, are before him. From the affirmative [here] we derive a negative, and why should we further compel him, for 'the wicked man shall die for his iniquity' [Ezek. 3:18] if he will not observe [the commandment]."

[7] This instance falls within the context of community regulations that enable townspeople to compel observance upon each other.

[8] See B. B.B. 8b, s.v., *Akhpeih*; B. Ket. 49b, s.v., *Akhpeih, Mordekhai*, B. B.B., 490; *Or Zaru'a*, 1, Laws of Charity 4.

[9] *Mordekhai, Or Zarua*, loc. cit.

[10] The narrative reads: "R. Jonathan and R. Yannai were in session. A person came and kissed R. Jonathan's feet. R. Yannai asked him: 'What favor did you ever do for him, that he repays you in this manner?' [Jonathan] replied: 'Once he came to complain to me about his son, that [I compel the latter] to support him. I told him to cry out in the synagogue and disgrace him.' [Yannai] asked him: 'Why did you

not [simply] compel him?' [Jonathan] answered: '[Is it possible to] force him?' [Yannai] said to him: 'Are you still [in doubt] regarding this?' R. Jonathan retracted, and established the tradition in his [Yannai's] name. R. Jacob ben Aha came forward: 'R. Samuel b. Nahman, in the name of R. Jonathan, said: "The son is compelled to support the father."'"

[11] See, e.g., *Kitzvot ha-Hoshen, Hol ha-Moed* 97:16; *Minhat Hinukh*, Commandment 479.

[12] *Midrash Tanhuma, Ekev* 3 (ed. Buber, p. 79), from the exposition by Simeon bar Yohai that "regarding two commandments for which the Holy One, blessed be He, revealed their reward, and they are: extremely minor, [and] most stringent [. . .]—they are equivalent in this world regarding the reward given [for their observance]."

[13] See *Sefer ha-Hinukh*, Commandment 33: "If the court has the power, he is compelled, as we have written above, for the negation of a positive [commandment], the court enforces." This was already questioned by Judah b. Samuel Rosanes at the end of the book *Parashat Derakhim; Minhat Hinukh*, Commandment 33; see also *Sedeh Hemed ha-Shalem*, 4, *Ma'arekhet Mem*. In our opinion, however, this can be resolved in accordance with our hypothesis.

[14] See *Sedeh Hemed ha-Shalem*, 4, *Ma'arekhet Mem*, 108, who resolves this in a similar manner. For the difference between lashes and whipping, see Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah*, Laws of Ritual Slaughtering 13:3–4. He states that lashes are administered by the authority of the Torah for the violation of a negative commandment, even if one is ultimately prevented from observing the commandment due to circumstances beyond his control; lashes, administered on the authority of the rabbis, however, are applied only when the motive of the offender is improper, such as in the case in which he "tears off the bird's wings."

[15] See a similar explanation by Aaron b. Moses Fuld, Y. fol. 12, s.v., *Ve-Havi Mehi*.

[16] See Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah*, Laws of *Mamzerim* 6:7, who derived fixed laws from these one-time narratives; see also the commentaries on Maimonides, loc. cit.

[17] See also B. Qid. 31b.

[18] See also the law as set forth in Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah*, Laws of Mamzerim 6:4–5.

[19] B. Qid. 30b; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah*, Laws of *Mamzerim* 6:6.

[20] Tosafot, Qid. 31a, s.v. *Kevar*; idem, 32a, s.v. *Oro*.

[21] *Pit'hei Teshuwah, Yoreh Deah* 240:9.

[22] The Talmud formulates the answer as follows: "Pour some water for them in a basin, and screech for them like chickens!" See the commentary of Rashi, ad loc.

[23] *Terumat ha-Deshen* 40, cited in *Beit Yosef, Yoreh Deah* 240, s.v. *Katw be-T[erumat] h[a-Deshen]; Shulhan Arukh, Yoreh Deah* 240:25.

[24] Cited the name of Israel Isserlein, *Terumat ha-Deshen*, Para. 167; also cited in *Darkei Moshe, Yoreh Deah* 240:10; *Hagahah* on *Shulhan Arukh, Yoreh Deah* 240:25.

[25] This is indicated by B. Qid. 41a: "A man may not betroth a woman until he sees her, lest he find something repulsive in her, and she become detestable to him, and the all merciful said, 'Love your fellow as yourself ' [Lev. 19:18]." See also the formulation by Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hil. Ishut* 3:19: "Lest she not find favor in his eyes, and he consequently divorces her, or has relations with her while hating her."

[26] Maimonides, op cit., 21:17. For the interpretation of this law as applied by Rabbinical courts, see my *The Relations between Parents and Children in Israeli and Jewish Law* (Tel Aviv, 2000), pp. 202–203, 391–396, 473–475, 530–532 (Heb.).

[27] Idem, p. 32.

[28] Idem, p. 28.

[29] In the beginning of his opinion (p. 17), however, Schapira wrote differently, asserting that it would seem that the father does not have preferential standing over the mother in the case that the child is over six years old, since the rule of "[from the age of six, a teacher may accept pupils, and] stuff them with Torah like an ox" applies to such a son. This means, as understood by Schapira, that the father does not have preference over the mother as regards custody. See my *Relations between Parents and Children*, pp. 511–513.

[30] See *Relations between Parents and Children*, pp. 397–410, regarding the dissenting views of Joseph b. David Ibn Lev (1500–1580), Meir b. Isaac Katzenellbogen of Padua (1473–1565), Samuel b. Moses Di Medina (1503–1590), and Moses b. Joseph Trani (1500–1580).

[31] For their exact views, with quotations, see *Relations between Parents and Children*, pp. 432–435.

Passover Haggadah

The Passover Haggadah contains the text recited at the ritual meal—the seder—held on Passover eve in Jewish homes and communal gatherings ranging from synagogues to the Israeli kibbutzim. It is probably the most widely used text of the Jewish people, and it has exerted a noticeable influence on Jewish life and thought through the ages. Since the emergence of book printing, the Haggadah has appeared in several thousand editions, and it is represented in manuscripts from the ninth century and on.

For more than a century, the Haggadah has been published in bilingual editions, with the original Hebrew and Aramaic languages standing next to translations into the languages of the communities using it.

As is common with liturgical texts, there is no single, uniform Haggadah. Rather, containing quotations from the Hebrew Bible, Mishnah, Talmud, midrash, and other early medieval texts, it is a composition of many different genres, including benedictions, prayers, stories, interpretations of Biblical texts, songs, short dialogues, and so on. Yet whatever passages appear in a particular edition, the main topic remains the story of Israel's departure from Egypt, or, in the Haggadah's metaphor, the passage from slavery to freedom. This central theme, as we shall see, is reflected in many different ways throughout the Haggadah.

The Elements of the Haggadah

The Haggadah normally is divided into fifteen discrete elements, each marking an act to be performed or a literary passage to be read during the seder (see figs. 115–119). The seder normally begins with a recitation of the names of these sections, and, since they are clearly marked in most printed editions, they also function as dividers within the ritual, marking the passage from one aspect of the ceremony to another. The following elements normally are singled out:

1. Sanctification of the day (*qaddesh* or *qiddush*)
2. Washing of hands (*rahatz*), without benediction
3. Dipping a vegetable in salt water (*karpas*)
4. Breaking the middle matzah (*yahatz*)
5. Recitation of the Haggadah proper (*maggid*)
6. Washing of hands, with benediction (*rahatz*)
7. Reciting the blessing on the matzah (*motzi*)
8. Eating the matzah (*matzah*)
9. Dipping bitter herbs in *haroset* (*maror*)
10. Eating of bitter herbs/horse radish with matzah (*korek*)
11. Passover meal (*shulhan orek*)
12. Eating the *afikoman* (*tzafun*)
13. Grace after meal (*barek*)
14. Recitation of the Hallel-psalms (*hallel*)
15. Ending (*nirtzah*)

The Hebrew names of the elements, indicated in parentheses, are called "signs of the seder" (*simane ha-seder*). As a rule, these acts are accompanied by verbal expressions (mostly benedictions). Others of the acts are themselves verbal expressions, as, for instance, the sanctification of the day, the recitation of the Exodus-story, grace after the meal, etc.

This chain of "signs of the Seder" was delineated by Samuel ben Salomon of Falaise (late thirteenth century), a specialist on the Haggadah. It is the best known and most widely used of several such systems, in which the terminology, as well as the number of elements, varies. These chains were developed so that even those who did not have a text of the Haggadah could remember its order and contents. Thus, a characteristic of all the chains is that they are mnemotechnic aids, with rhyme and assonance easing re-collection of the Haggadah's elements and order. This is true of the chain in common use today, which often is sung at the beginning of the seder.

The Text

The earliest complete text of the Haggadah appears in the tenth century prayer book of Saadiah Gaon. An almost complete text also is embedded in the so-called *Seder* of Amram Gaon, from the ninth century. Through lengthy quotes, this version gives a good picture of the text used in Babylonia, which Amram wanted to be adopted everywhere. Haggadah texts contemporary with or older than the one in Amram's *Seder* are preserved only in fragments, mostly from the Cairo genizah.

Among the early witnesses for the Haggadah also are those embedded in *Mahzor Vitry*, a prayerbook from the eleventh century, and in Maimonides' Mishneh Torah, from the twelfth. The author of the former was close to Rashi, and it is a witness to the shape of the text in the eleventh century and before, showing a clear dependence on Amram's version. It reproduces the text only sketchily, however. In the Mishneh Torah, the Haggadah appears as a separate appendix, after the description of the

ritual of the seder evening. Here Maimonides restricts himself to the *maggid* section only, since it constitutes the telling of the story of the Exodus proper. It is not fully clear when separate editions of the Haggadah began to be used. The oldest separate texts originate in the thirteenth century, which is also when illuminated Haggadah manuscripts began to appear.

Despite the relatively late date of these sources, the Haggadah as we know it was in the main put together already in Talmudic times, with some essential parts deriving even from the Mishnaic period. In fact, the final chapter of Mishnah Pesahim contains a basic outline of the Haggadah as well as quotations from some of its passages. Even so, the Haggadah remained in a fluid state through Talmudic times, and, for complete forms and a stable text, we are restricted to sources from the geonic period and later.

It actually turns out that the text of the Haggadah, with the exception of some popular folk songs and some local elaborations of the established text, inserted at the end, remained almost intact from geonic times until the nineteenth century. Then, the vast changes the Jewish populations underwent throughout Europe had repercussions in all fields of activity, especially the liturgy. Nevertheless, among the Orthodox and other traditionalists, the Haggadah has remained almost unchanged, while Liberal and Reform Jews have allowed fairly radical changes. In Israel, especially the kibbutzim have experimented freely with the performance of the Passover ritual. While all this has resulted in the availability of a wide range of divergent texts, here we are confined to an analysis of the text of the traditional Haggadah.

Qaddesh—Sanctification

Passover is one of the great feasts of the year, and the fact that it is different from a weekday is clearly marked—as on all holy days—through a proclamation of its holiness (*qiddush* or *qaddesh*). After festival candles are lit, the first cup of wine is filled, and two central blessings are recited: the blessing over the wine (*birkat ha-yayin*) and the blessing over the day (*birkat ha-qiddush*). According to the Mishnah, Rabbinic opinions were divided on the order of these blessings. Current practice follows the school of Hillel: the blessing over the wine is recited first. The blessing for time (*birkat ha-zeman*; also called *she-hechiyanu*: ". . . who has preserved us, sustained us, and . . .") was added to the other two in the post-Mishnaic period. Drinking the first cup of wine completes the sanctification.

Since Passover may commence on any evening in the week, the Sabbath may need to be taken into account in the *qiddush*. On a Friday evening, the sanctification for Passover is made to encompass the sanctification for the Sabbath primarily through the addition of Gen. 1:31–2:3. If Passover begins at Saturday evening, when Sabbath ends, two blessings of the normal *havdalah*, which concludes all Sabbaths, are inserted, one for the lights (*birkat ha-ner*), another on the separation of Israel from other peoples, the Sabbath from working days and from the festivals, etc. In this way, the symbolism of light is emphasized as well as the simple fact that there is a transition from one hallowed time to another.

The Aramaic Introduction to the Haggadah

The *maggid*-section, which elaborates the story of the Exodus, is introduced by an Aramaic prose passage that states:

> This is the bread of affliction that our ancestors ate in the land of Egypt. Let all who are hungry come and eat; let all who are in need come and celebrate Passover. Now we are here; next year in the land of Israel. Now we are slaves, next year, free.

Formulations differ in several early manuscripts, and, in some of the earliest, the passage is lacking. From a topical point of view, the three sentences do not hang together well, suggesting that the passage is not unitary. Goldschmidt assumed correctly that, at the earliest, it dates from Talmudic, and probably from geonic, times, even if the sentences, taken separately, are older. The discussion in B. Pes. 36a-b and many other places shows that the expression "the bread

of affliction" was in use in the Talmudic period. But it is worth noticing that, in these sources, the expression is given in Hebrew, not Aramaic, and is discussed independently, not in connection with the Aramaic phrases in the Haggadah. The early texts contain detailed discussions of "the bread of affliction," and they all connect it with Passover, as does the Bible. They restrict themselves, however, to the question of what kind of bread is implied. Mostly it is understood as denoting "the bread of poverty" (or "the poor man's bread"), and this results in the ruling that the obligatory matzah, which everyone must eat on Passover night, must not be a "rich matzah," however that is defined.

The leader recites the first sentence of the Aramaic introduction while simultaneously raising the plate of matzah. In many places the custom is to open the door at this moment, appropriate to the invitation for the needy to come and eat. After the recitation, the three matzot are covered, and the second cup of wine is filled. As a situational marker, the introductory sentence refers to the raised matzah, that is, to the ongoing celebration. But it refers also to Deut. 16:3, which dictates the commandment to eat matzah. Thus a bridge is established to the first Passover, when the Israelites "departed from the land of Egypt hurriedly"—a bridge that facilitates identification with the Exodus generation. Indeed, in several Sephardic texts, the Aramaic introduction is preceded by the clause "*we* departed from Egypt with haste."

The Aramaic introduction is intended as an invitation to a meal, in which the hungry and needy are invited to come and take part. Yet it is difficult to find a situation in which this invitation could have been genuine.[1] While the Temple stood, uninvited guests could not take part in the meal at all, since the Passover lamb was eaten only by members of a predetermined group (M. Zeb. 5:8). There was no place for surprise guests, poor or rich. What about after the destruction? Now the invitation appears in the wrong place. In order properly to celebrate the Passover, the individual should participate in the sanctification of the day and the first cup of the wine, that is, the *qiddush*. One could, of course, imagine that some participants might come late and still be allowed to take part. But it is improbable that the order of the ritual itself would *dictate* that those who respond to this invitation break the accepted order. No solution to this oddity is apparent.

The third sentence, with its reference to Israel, clearly was formulated in the diaspora, presumably after the fall of the Second Temple. In the time of the Temple, the recitation concentrated on the Exodus and the people of Israel's celebration of Passover in freedom (even if Jerusalem was governed by foreign powers) and in a functioning temple. After the destruction, the theme of liberation became pertinent in a new way, which has applied to Jews throughout their subsequent history. The third sentence, interestingly, has nothing to do with the first two, but stands alone. Since the seder ends with a similar wish, a unity is created between the commencement and end of the Passover night ritual.

The Child's Question

In Hebrew, the passage is called *mah nishtanah*, in English, commonly, the "four questions." As a matter of fact, there is only *one* question: "Why is this night different from all [other] nights?," followed by four clauses in which the differences are listed. Thus the passage might more accurately be called, "the child's question."

The text belongs to those parts of the Haggadah proper attested from an early time. It is preserved in complete form already at M. Pes. 10:4, though Mishnaic versions—which are numerous in different editions and manuscripts—differ significantly from the current Haggadah. Ancient sources generally list three elements following the question: dipping, matzah, and flesh. Saadiah's Siddur and Amram's Seder have dipping, matzah, maror, and reclining, in that order. This represents an eastern form localized to Babylonia that was a revision of the earlier Mishnaic form, or perhaps it was different from the beginning. The continued history of the text shows that the eastern form eventually superseded its western counterpart.

Why the number of elements increased from three to four is not clear. Perhaps it results from the influence of other parts of the Haggadah, in which the number four plays a conspicuous part: the four cups, and, especially, the four sons, referred to below.

In place of the missing element "flesh," the eastern text has "maror" and "reclining." "Maror" appears also in good Mishnah manuscripts, indicating that, from an early time, it was a viable alternative. Maror refers also to the Passover meal eaten from time immemorial, since Exod. 12:8 states that the Paschal lamb should be eaten with matzah and maror, bitter herb. The second "new" element—"reclining"—entered the Haggadah relatively late; it is missing in Mishnaic and Talmudic texts and originates probably not before geonic times. But the custom to which it refers may be much earlier, since it is well known that, in antiquity, one ate at a banquet while reclining on a long sofa at the side of a low table.

M. Pes. 10:4 explains that, at the point at which the *Mah Nishtanah* appears, the son is to take the initiative of asking questions, thus giving the father the opportunity to explain God's great deeds on behalf of the people. The son could ask pretty much anything, but it was supposed that he would ask about something special in the celebration of Passover, for instance, why they mixed a second cup or why they took away the table (B. Pes. 115b). What if he did not ask anything at all? In anticipation of such a situation, the *mah nishtanah* was inserted. The father now could ask on the son's behalf and thus instruct him how to ask (M. Pes. 10:4).

The First Introduction to the Midrash

The son's question is followed by an almost verbatim quotation of Deut. 6:21 ("We were Pharaoh's slaves in Egypt; and the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand"), continued by a statement on the importance to later generations of God's earlier saving acts. This explains why all must speak about the Exodus from Egypt, those who already are learned as well as children and those who so far have no knowledge. Here we approach a central theme of the Haggadah, that the Exodus is not only an event that took place long ago. Rather, all who partake in the meal have benefited from and now actually participate in the Exodus. Thus Raba, B. Pes. 116b, emphasizes that the father must say the words, "and *us* did he bring out from there."

Exemplary Stories

The notion that even the most educated people must linger over the Exodus story is illustrated in the short anecdote about five famous rabbis, who, celebrating the Passover at B'nei Brak, became so absorbed in the telling of the Exodus that they failed to notice that time had come to recite the morning prayers. Illustrating the appropriate way to spend the seder evening, the anecdote appears only in the Haggadah and, in a different version, at T. Pes. 10:12, which reports simply that Gamaliel (not mentioned in the Mishnah's story) and other sages were "occupied with the laws of the Passover that entire night, until the cock crowed." There is no way of knowing whether these anecdotes report a single event, two different events, or whether they have a historical foundation at all.

Next comes an independent statement of Eleazar b. Azariah. Reporting a dispute between Ben Zoma and other sages, this passage has no special connection to Passover night. Its original context is M. Ber. 1:5, where it is preceded by the rule that one must mention the Exodus from Egypt daily in the evening Shema, just as one does in the morning. This is the case even though, since ritual fringes are not worn at night, one might assume that it is unnecessary to recite Num. 15:37–41, which concerns the commandment to wear fringes and the last verse of which mentions the Exodus. The point is that one in all events includes this recitation in the evening Shema.

In the Haggadah, Eleazar b. Azariah's utterance has been detached from the law regarding the Shema. It apparently is here because of his mention of the Exodus and the fact that his name occurs also in the

preceding anecdote. The result, in all events, is to strengthen the initial anecdote, making clear the nature of Rabbinic study. It is possible that Eleazar's statement even influenced the wording of the anecdote, which states that the rabbis' discussion concerned the Exodus rather than "the rules about the Passover," as the Tosefta has it.

As for the content of Eleazar b. Azariah's utterance, Ben Zoma's statement that he cites is an example of *halakhic midrash*, which establishes or supports a ruling on the basis of an interpretation of a biblical passage. Here Ben Zoma proves that one must mention the Exodus in the evening Shema based upon the fact that Scripture commands people to remember the Exodus "*all* days of your life." Since it would have been sufficient to say "the days of your life," the apparently extra word "all" must have a special meaning, the Bible being perfect and containing nothing redundant or superfluous. Thus Ben Zoma argues that, in this context, "all" modifies the word "days" so as to include evenings as well.

Baraita of the Four Sons

A short benediction extolling God for giving Torah to the people is followed by a Tannaitic passage in which four types of sons are said to be reflected in the four biblical passages that command the father to teach his son(s) about the Exodus (Exod. 12:26; 13:8; 13:14; Deut. 6:20). Three of the passages contain a question, one does not. Hence the baraita describes three sons who pose questions and one who does not even know how to ask. Each son, except the final one, who does not know how to ask, is presented in a similar way:

(a) A son, what does he say?
(b) The question (+ possible comments)
(c) An answer (+ possible comments).

The questions and answers depend upon biblical quotations. Passages of this sort belong to a genre of numerical sayings common in wisdom writing both in the Bible and in Jewish traditional literature. Some of these lack scriptural proof-texts and reflect human experience or history in general. Others, such as this one, unique to the Rabbinic literature, depend upon proof-texts, which they use in an aggadic context.[2]

Most striking in the passage is the Haggadah's judgment of the wicked son's question[3]—"What do *you* mean by this service?" (Exod. 12:26)—understood to suggest that this son denied God. For modern readers, the sharp reaction to the use of the word "you" seems strange. Yet the rabbis were very sensitive on this point. Heinemann[4] notes that, with the exception of the call to prayer—"Bless the Lord who is blessed"—on no other occasion in the public synagogue service does one group within the congregation address another party in the second person. Such a use of "you," rather than "we" thus was immediately interpreted as the speaker's method of keeping a distance from the community, of rejecting the yoke of heaven and thus of denying God.

Yet, citing Deut. 6:20—"What is the meaning of the testimonies and the statutes . . . which the Lord our God has commanded *you*?—the wise son also uses the second person, a fact not missed in Rabbinic commentaries on this passage. But many manuscripts and early editions of the Haggadah have "us," which may have only later been changed to "you" in order correctly to cite the biblical verse. Alternatively, the "you" is original and it was often supplanted by "us" specifically to solve the problem of the difference between the wise and wicked sons.

The Second Introduction to the Midrash

The passage that starts "In the beginning our ancestors served idols" is composed of at least two, probably three, parts. It explains what is meant by "shame" in M. Pes. 10:4's injunction, "According to the understanding of the son his father teaches him. He begins with the shame and ends with the glory." Then follows a clear new start to the telling of the Exodus story, marked formally with a benediction in the third person—similar to the one that preceded the baraita about the four sons—and topically by the shift of the theme to God's promise

to Israel. The imperative "Come and learn . . ." then continues the previous text in that it exemplifies someone who "has risen against us to destroy us." But it also marks a new start in that it shifts to the second person and leaves the theme of promise.

The Midrash

Like haggadic midrash in general, the passages that follow, interpreting Deut. 26:5–8, aim at edification and theological/philosophical speculation, not at establishing or justifying Halakhic rules. The largest part of this material consists of quotations from biblical texts, mostly from Exodus, that in two different ways throw light on the primary text. Some simply say the same thing as that text; these are not paraphrases but, rather, parallels. Others serve as examples, proving the correctness of *Rabbinic* comments on the meaning of Deut. 26:5–8.

From a formal point of view, the clear shift from one type to the other occurs in the middle of the midrash. One might say that the composition commences at a leisurely tempo, retelling the primary text through references to the narrative in Genesis and Exodus. But in the middle it turns from narrative to explanation, pointing at different passages in Scripture that suggest meanings the rabbis themselves adduce for words and phrases in the primary text. The shift takes place specifically when God appears for the first time as the grammatical subject in the middle of Deut. 26:7. Here God's role becomes active, unlike in the beginning of the passage, where all God does is *hear* and *see* the plight of Israel. For this reason, the beginning of the midrash refers to Israel's plight, the later section, to God's activity.

M. Pes. 10:4 instructs the father to teach the son "according to his understanding." He "begins with shame and ends with glory; he *expounds* from "An Aramean sought to destroy my father" (Deut. 26:5) until he finishes the whole section." According to this rule, all Jewish men were obliged to expound Deut. 26:5–8, a task that only the sages were qualified to do, really. Thus the task was mostly reduced to reciting these fixed and well-known midrashic passages. That the choice fell precisely on Deut. 26:5–8 is understandable, since these verses fit Passover and, from of old, those who offered the first-fruits in the Temple recited this same passage (Deut. 26:1–10). Thus the scriptural passage, at least, was well-known to ordinary people. The obligation to explain the text probably dates from Temple times, and it is commonly held, though with some debate, that the midrash in the present text ultimately derives from the Mishnaic period times, even if it got its present shape after the redaction of the Babylonian Talmud, probably some time in the seventh century.

The Expansion

The end of the midrash consists of (1) an expansion of the interpretation of Deut. 26:8 in the form of an alternative interpretation and (2) the attribution to Judah of an acronym consisting of the first letter of each of the ten plagues. The alternative interpretation links the five acts of God in Deut. 26:8 to the ten plagues listed in Exod. 7–12, suggesting that each act of God reflects a set number of plagues, which are, in the end, listed. Then comes the passage regarding the acronym, found also in Sifre Deut. 301, suggesting that, from an early time, the first letters of the names of the plagues were grouped in three pseudo-"words." The various interpretations of these groupings shows that the words were conferred a mystical and powerful significance. Indeed, the acronym is quoted widely in Rabbinic literature, where it commonly is connected with the rod of Moses, on which it is said to have been engraved. The acronym also is said to recall the correct order of the plagues, which David, in the Psalms, presented incorrectly.

Tannaitic Expositions on the Splitting of the Sea of Reeds

Two additional passages are not mentioned in the Mishnah and are not mandatory parts of the Haggadah at all. They are missing in the text of Maimonides and also in several of the fragments from the Cairo genizah.

The first consists of a series of pronouncements by three well known sages on the punishments God executed upon the Egyptians. Here the center of interest has moved to the crossing of the Sea of Reeds, which is explained as even more miraculous than the Exodus itself. The several passages are almost identical, and they all presuppose the first, which is logically antecedent to the rest. They have a common structure:

(a) Quotation phrase ("So-and-So said. . . .")
(b) Response: "Whence (in Scripture) do you deduce that . . .?"
(c) Citation of the relevant biblical source
(d) Short interpretation
(e) Deduction of the consequences of the reasoning

The question indicated at (b) is quite common in the Rabbinic literature, in which the Bible is said to form the foundation for all knowledge of God, God's acts, and God's demands. Indeed, the pericope dates from Mishnaic times, though it hardly appears before the second part of the second century. Although Maimonides did not accept it in his text of the Haggadah, his son testified that it was recited in his home. Amram accepts it without comment. Saadiah takes a mediating position. He underlines the fact that the pericope is not part of the Haggadah in its true sense, but he allows it explicitly and even quotes the text. Hence we see that although the custom of reciting the pericope probably was well established in the ninth century, at least in Babylonia and the areas under its influence, its position was not secure, and there were presumably many places in the areas under Palestinian influence that only gradually accepted it.

Dayyenu

The second addition to the midrash is the song *Dayyenu*. It has two main parts, each introduced by an exclamation of wonder for the many good things God bestows the people. First, after the introductory exclamation, come fourteen strophes with an identical structure, linked to each other in the following way: "Had God done *a* but not *b*—it would have been enough for us; had he *b* but not *c*—it would have been enough for us; . . ." Each strophe ends with the refrain *Dayyenu* ("it would have been enough for us"), which gives the song an antiphonal character. Then, after a second exclamation, similar but not identical to the first, follows a repetition of the earlier central clauses with statements like "God did *a*, and *b*, and *c*. . . ." The song ends with an appropriate concluding phrase "to atone for all our sins."

The method of repetition and linking both within the first part and between the second and the first part is common in the folklore form called the *chain song*. In such songs, the strophes can be linked to each other in different ways. In *Dayyenu*'s method, the new verse repeats the second half-strophe of the preceding verse and then adds all the central statements of the earlier strophes in a string. It emphasizes that Israel did not *simply* experience a number of great deeds—each of which was sufficient by itself—but all of them together.

In spite of the fact that *Dayyenu* is permeated with allusions to the Bible, no text is close to it in both form and topic, neither in the Bible nor the Rabbinic literature. Indeed, *Dayyenu* is perhaps the most isolated text in the Haggadah, and its date is therefore very difficult to establish. Even so, the Psalms, several of which extol God's acts in history, at least offer several models of such a list of God's deeds in behalf of the people, so that we can have some sense of how this song might have developed. Ps. 136, with its short statements on God's acts in creation and history and its recurrent antiphonal response, "for his steadfast love endures for ever," resembles the structure of *Dayyenu*. After a threefold call to praise God, come several designations of God as the lord of creation (4–9); then there is a jump to the God of Exodus and the sojourn in the wilderness, without any reference to the patriarchs (10–24). Here we find the best resemblances to *Dayyenu*. The topics are fairly limited: creation, Exodus, and wilderness. Interestingly, the gift of land, v. 21, does not refer to the land of Israel but to Bashan and the land of the Amorites, that is, the land west of the Jordan. This psalm speaks before the people has entered the land of Israel.

Chain songs often function primarily as

entertainment, which probably is the case with *Had Gadya*—the beloved and well known, "An Only Kid." But just as often, they have a pedagogic function, as do *Ehad mi yodea* ("Who knows one?") and *Dayyenu*. Through repetition, the songs strengthen instruction of important religious lessons. Thus *Dayyenu* contains a series of statements on God's acts on behalf of Israel. Towards the end, the entry into the land is mentioned as well as the building of the Temple. Even though *Dayyenu* does not completely cover the theme of the Haggadah's midrash, it adheres fairly well to it. Thus, while it certainly was not part of the celebration of Passover in biblical times, it probably was composed to be a part of the celebration represented by the Haggadah, and it appropriately concludes the central section of the Haggadah that presents the midrash on the Exodus.

The Teaching of Rabban Gamaliel

After *Dayyenu*, we turn to the symbolic foods arranged on the seder plate. These are introduced through Gamaliel's statement—taken from M. Pes. 10:5, the basis for the following several sections of the Haggadah—that, during the seder, one is obligated to explain three things: the paschal offering, matzah, and the bitter herb. This introduction is followed by a paragraph regarding each food, the significance of which is explained through biblical references. These three paragraphs may or may not be unitary with Gamaliel's statement, which can stand alone. In any event, understanding these symbols means that each and every person can, and indeed is obligated to, identify with those who went out of Egypt. This is explicit in the following paragraph ("In every generation, a person is obligated to see himself as though he personally left Egypt"), which also is based upon biblical references and which exposes a fundamental feature of the Haggadah, the fusion of the present generation with the one that went out of Egypt. This blurring of distinctions between now and then justifies the duty, expressed next, to praise God for what the deity has done for previous generations as well as the present one ("Therefore, we must revere, exalt, extol . . .").

Codex Kaufmann preserves a more reliable text than is found in standard editions of the Mishnah. The passage that begins "In every generation . . .," absent in Kaufmann, is an interpolation introduced only in late editions of the Mishnah and Talmud. These words appear as a marginal gloss in the Leiden manuscript of the Palestinian Talmud. Similarly, the best manuscripts have the same order of foods as Kaufmann: *pesah, marorim, matzah*. In the final paragraph, the list of verbs praising God varies in the manuscripts. Better, earlier, manuscripts tend to have fewer verbs, though all unvaryingly begin with the same four: revere, exalt, extol, acclaim.

Hallel

The Hallel Psalms are recited not only on Passover but on all major festivals, since at least Tannaitic times. The Hallel recited at the Passover seder consists of Pss. 113–118, with Pss. 113–114 recited before the meal and Pss. 115–118 read after grace. In early texts, there is some confusion as to the identification of the Hallel, partly because there are various forms of the Hallel and partly because the texts are sometimes unclear concerning the extent of the Hallel.

The main distinction is between the *full* (or *complete*) Hallel, also called the *Egyptian* Hallel, which comprises Pss. 113–118 in its entirety, and the *half* Hallel, which is the same as the full Hallel except for the omission of Pss. 115:1–11 and 116:1–11. But in addition to the "full" and the "half " Hallel, there is also the "Great Hallel," referring to Ps. 136, which also is recited at the seder, immediately after Pss. 115–118. The concept of the half Hallel appears to be later than that of the full Hallel. Though it is recited on the last six days of Passover, its links to the holiday in early times are tenuous.

Hallel is dealt with at M. Pes. 10:6–7 and the parallel passage at T. Pes. 10:9, which present a Houses-dispute on the extent of the Hallel. The Shammaites say it contains only Ps. 113, while the Hillelites maintain that it contains Pss. 113–114. This text normally is understood to presuppose the division of an already established form of the Hallel—containing Pss. 113–118—into two

parts, one before the meal and one after the Grace, as we now have things. The dispute, then, concerns what portion of the Hallel is recited before the meal. But, on the basis of the Mishnaic passage, some scholars maintain that Hallel indeed grew from an original one or two psalms to the six recited today. This view seems at first to have merit: in the Haggadah, Hallel is divided into two parts, recited at some distance from each other, and a natural explanation of this is that the second part is a later addition. But there are good reasons for maintaining the traditional view, that the original form of Hallel indeed comprised Pss. 113–118.

The traditional view is supported, first, by the wording of M. Pes. 10:6, which asks "*up to what point* does one recite the Hallel?" This presupposes that we already know the Hallel's starting point, and that the text reaches beyond the point referred to; otherwise it would be pointless to ask, "up to what point?" Second, the issue in the Mishnah does not appear to be the use of the Hallel in the liturgy in general, but, rather, timing, that is, which psalms are read at what point in the seder. This is supported by the fact that the seder's divided version must be considered a late form of the Hallel, which was first used in the Temple service, from which it migrated to the seder. The texts are oddly silent about the reasons for the division, although it is conspicuous and unique to the seder. The second part of T. Pes. 10:9 states only that, perhaps conscious of the correct sequence of historical events, the Shammaites held that it is not appropriate to mention the Exodus at this point in the service. For the Hillelites, this detail apparently was no problem, and they rebuked the Shammaites for their inconsistency, since they have no qualms about mentioning the Exodus in morning services, even though it took place only later in the day. In all events, this does not explain the division of the Hallel.

The Second Cup

The first part of the Hallel is followed by the "Blessing for Redemption" (*birkat ha-geullah*), when the second cup of wine is raised and then drunk. The blessing thanks God for the redemption from Egypt, an act that explicitly encompasses those present at the seder—". . . who has redeemed *us* and our fathers from Egypt." It continues with a hope that future celebrations of Passover might be observed as before, in a rebuilt Temple through the offering of the Passover sacrifice. The blessing for redemption is mentioned at M. Pes. 10:6, which the Haggadah quotes almost in its entirety.

Grace After Meals

This is not specific to Passover, but a regular grace after meals, preceded, as on all holidays, by Ps. 126. A long and complicated literary construction, the grace has an equally long and complicated history. In its present form, it begins with an introductory exhortation by the leader to bless God, answered by the others who have dined. This is followed by benedictions that specifically recognize God's provision of nourishment to the whole world. The third part, introduced "We thank you," thanks God for the land of Israel, the Exodus, the covenant, and Torah, and ends with a benediction thanking God for the land and sustenance. The fourth part follows the same pattern, beginning with a prayer for mercy for the Israelite nation and Jerusalem and concluding with a blessing that thanks God for mercifully rebuilding Jerusalem. A paragraph that appears on all holidays is inserted in the middle of the fourth part, requesting that the people's prayers rise up to and be heard by God and begging God to respond to the people in mercy. When the seder coincides with Sabbath evening, a passage appropriate to the Sabbath also is inserted here. The fifth part of the grace commences with a blessing, recognizing God as good.

The final, sixth, section consists of a series of prayers beginning "The Merciful one will . . ." and enumerating Israel's daily and messianic expectations: God will reign throughout all time, will lift the yoke of exile, will bless the table on which the participants have just eaten, will send the

prophet Elijah, harbinger of the messiah, will grant the people a share in eternity, etc. Thus, in line with the thematic concerns of the grace as a whole, the people's everyday hopes are tied up with the messianic expectation, the fulfillment of which is vouchsafed by God's trustworthiness in providing food. After the grace, the benediction is recited for the third cup of wine, which then is drunk.

Conclusion of the Hallel

The conclusion of the Hallel has grown into a complicated section of the Haggadah, stretching until the blessing of the fourth cup. This long section contains (1) biblical verses that abjure God to pour out wrath on the gentiles; (2) Pss. 115–118, the second section of the Hallel per se; (3) the prayer *yehalleluka* ("May [all your creatures] praise you"); (4) the so-called Great Hallel (Ps. 136); (5) the prayer *nishmat kol hay* ("May all that breathes bless your name"); and (6) the blessing over the fourth cup.

(1) A prayer for revenge, the collection of biblical verses that begins "Pour out your fury" (Ps. 79:6–7; 69:25; Lam. 3:66) belongs among the most debated passages in the Haggadah. Similar collections appear in all local traditions, although great variations occur in the specific selection of verses. But the collection does not appear in the texts of Amram nor Saadiah, is lacking in the texts of some other early authorities (Rashi and Maimonides), and in most of the genizah texts. But it is present in *Mahzor Vitry* and in almost all subsequent Haggadot. Even if it is lacking in many of the important early texts, it is certainly old and is attested in the Cairo genizah.

(2–4) According to M. Pes. 10:7, Hallel formally extends to the fourth cup, and there is no doubt that by "Hallel" is meant Pss. 113–118 as a whole. Following the second part of Hallel is the "*birkat ha-shir*" ("blessing of the song"). Oddly, Talmudic rabbis disputed which passage is meant by this designation (B. Pes. 118a). Judah held it is the paragraph that begins, "May [all your creatures] praise you, Lord our God," while Yohanan said it is, "May all that breathes [bless your name]." Both these benedictions now are preserved in the traditional Haggadah, with the former, *Yehalleluka*, recited immediately after Ps. 118, and the latter, *nishmat kol hay*, recited after Ps. 136 (the Great Hallel). The benediction over the fourth cup follows, and in practice it is this benediction that today is called the *birkat ha-shir*. But in the earliest texts and commentaries, *birkat ha-shir* as a rule is identified with *yehalleluka*.[5]

Before turning to *nishmat kol hay* it is necessary to deal briefly with the Great Hallel and the question of a fifth cup of wine. Printed editions of B. Pes. 118a read: "Our rabbis taught: Over the fourth [cup] they conclude the Hallel and recite the Great Hallel; the words of R. Tarfon." Manuscripts and statements of geonim and other scholars, however, show that the text should read: "over the *fifth* [cup] they conclude the Hallel. . . ." In later manuscripts and the printed edition, this was corrected to "fourth" following the view of Rashi and his grandson, Rashbam, who were convinced that the text was in error. But if the reading "fifth" indeed is correct, it means that a custom of drinking a fifth cup goes back to Amoraic, perhaps even Tannaitic, times. In any case, in the geonic period, the custom was widespread, even if deemed voluntary. Since then, above all because Rashi and his followers were set against it, a fifth cup has not been drunk. But this cup's heritage remains in two aspects of the seder, the custom of filling a cup for Elijah and the recitation of the Great Hallel, which, as the Talmud states, provided the occasion for the fifth cup.

(5) The content and sequence of the final passages of the Hallel are complex. The Talmud suggests that one could recite either *nishmat kol hay* or *yehalleluka*; or one could use both of them; they could be placed together either before or after the Great Hallel, or separated, one before and the other after; the concluding benediction could be placed in one of them or in both. While the history of this literary unit is unclear, present usage was set in the second half of the twelfth century by Hayyim b. Hananel Ha-Cohen, who established placement of *yehalleluka* after the Egyptian Hallel without

a concluding benediction, followed by the Great Hallel and then *nishmat kol hay*, with a long concluding benediction that begins with the words, "Praised be your name forever." This usage was formalized by acceptance in the authoritative code, the *Arbaah Turim.*

The Ending

The formal grace having already been recited, after the fourth cup of wine, a blessing that is a "summary of the three [first sections of the grace]" is recited, thanking God for the fruit of the vine, the land of Israel, and requesting restoration of the Temple. Now the celebrant turns towards God with the assurance that the seder has been completed according to the rules and with a prayer that God also in future will protect the people. The name of the last passage—*nirtzah*—refers to an offering that has been accepted with pleasure. It is a late passage, actually the ending of a long hymn authored by Yosef Bonfils (Tov Elem), who lived in France in the eleventh century.

Illuminated Haggadot

The Haggadah is the most popular of Hebrew illuminated manuscripts. Illuminated Haggadot emerged in the thirteenth century, when the text had become fairly stable, and they were produced until the emergence of printed Haggadot, which also often were illuminated, and for some time after. Since the text is short, it was relatively cheap to produce, both the text by a scribe and the illuminations by an artist. To be sure, not every family could afford one. But the economic situation for Jews in Spain, France, Germany, and Italy—the home regions for most of the manuscripts, and the best—improved during the high middle ages, so that well-to-do families often could afford to commission an illustrated Haggadah.

The motifs of the illustrations were often culled from the Haggadah itself. Particularly popular motifs are the sages at B'nei Brak, the baraita of the four sons, and different scenes of the family gathered to celebrate the seder evening. Biblical motifs, especially with reference to the Exodus, are clustered around the midrash. Furthermore, the text itself was embellished in the usual manner of manuscript production. The result is that some of the illustrated Haggadot, both manuscripts and printed books, are among the most outstanding examples of book illustration in Jewish, and non-Jewish, literature.

Nils Martola

Notes

[1] Daniel Goldschmidt, *The Passover Haggadah: Its Sources and History* (Jerusalem, 1969), pp. 8–9 [Heb.].

[2] W.S. Towner, *The Rabbinic "Enumeration of Scriptural Examples"* (Leiden, 1973).

[3] This is absent from the version in the Mekhilta, suggesting that the Haggadah's version is later. Similarly, the other additions in the Haggadah's version give an impression of polish. The formulations in the Palestinian Talmud, for their part, depart sufficiently from the other two sources to force one to reckon with the possibility of a parallel, but independent, tradition.

[4] Joseph Heinemann, *Prayer in the Talmud: Forms and Patterns* (Berlin, 1977).

[5] Goldschmidt, op. cit., p. 65.

Phenomenology of Judaism

Judaism has had a complex history and exists in many forms. In light of this diversity, some claim that there is no essential Judaism, that the religion is whatever any group of Jews, or individual Jews, say it is. This article, by contrast, argues that there is a normative Judaism, consisting of certain basic structures and values a religion must have for it to be called Judaism. To accomplish our goal, we must explain, first, what we mean by "normative." "Religion," too, needs clarification, there being a widespread tendency, particularly among those influenced by anthropology, to equate religion simply with a cultural-spiritual style, a way of feeling about the world and acting

in it, a kind of mood or disposition. It will be suggested that while all these are important components of religion, they are not religion *per se*. Similarly, we will need to clear away the alien, often quite hostile, approaches to defining Judaism imposed on it by non-Jews, for whom Judaism has often been too important in their own self-definition to permit Jews themselves to define it. Finally, an adequate definition of "normative Judaism" must not only show what Judaism is but also what it is not. The usefulness of the phenomenological definition proposed here will be tested by asking how it deals with three different kinds of marginal or ambiguous religious groupings: Christianity, Samaritanism, and Yiddishism, each associated with claims to be part of, continue, or fulfill Judaism.

What is "Normative"?

The term normative raises many issues that often are ignored when people make affirmations about "normative Judaism" or any other religion. On the one hand, "normative" may be understood to signify what almost all (or perhaps only some) members of a given religious tradition take to be its standard practices, institutions, and beliefs. What is normative in this sense can be discovered through an opinion survey of the religion's members. We may take this to express a view of religion as a folk culture, and indeed some religions do support such understandings.

On the other hand, normative may be defined as the religion's ideal-structure, those beliefs, practices, and institutions that uniquely define it. This would be how the religion authoritatively understands itself. Opinion surveys would not only not be the best way to discover this sense of normativeness, they could seriously mislead, since many or most members of a tradition may only know or follow it imperfectly. Instead, we need to turn to the religion's foundational writings, practices, and/or oral traditions. Whether or not the actual religious community preserves these archetypal structures is not directly relevant, unless this lack of observance is permitted or endorsed by the norms themselves.

A third way of understanding normative stresses what the elite members of the religion, those most immersed in its literature, teachings, and practices, hold to be essential. This allows for a mixture of sociological and archetypal approaches to what is normative. The problem is that what any given elite holds to be essential may be quite different from the views of the foundational sources, even though all elites legitimate themselves through (interpretations of) those sources. Over the centuries of a tradition, elite views change. In fact, how to define the elite will probably itself be debatable, with very different groups all claiming this status.

Still, since every elite claims legitimacy through the religion's foundational sources, those source's authority, at least, is clearly acknowledged on all sides. This means that only the archetypal approach offers a hope of surmounting the problems of the other two understandings of what is normative. Therefore, we proceed here on the assumption that normative religion refers to its ideal-structure, those beliefs, practices, and institutions that uniquely define it, which are authoritatively presented in its foundational sources. However, religions differ, and some center on changeable folk values; their sources arise from folk values and change with them. These pose special problems.

Folkist Religions and Scriptural Traditions

While religions affirm moral, social, and theological norms, in many religions, these affirmations are mostly tacit and taken-for-granted. This holds for native religions, folk religions even in complex societies, and, in general, for religions whose members seldom come into contact with other religions and cultures. Only those religious communities that have extensive contact with others feel the necessity to make their own beliefs and norms explicit. We therefore find clear formulations of normative beliefs and practices chiefly in the religions of literate civilizations. In such civilizations, those norms are usually written down in texts ascribed a special sacrality, texts we commonly call

"scriptures." Devotees use these texts to define themselves and may even feel forced to reform themselves, their moral behavior and socio-political structures if they find these to be out of conformity to the norms depicted in the texts.

Still, many religions, even of literate civilizations, may be called "folkist." Their scriptures arose and often continue to arise out of periodic attempts to articulate the divine reality acknowledged by the civilization. Thus these religions make explicit and raise to the highest honor what previously had been the implicit consensus in folk culture. It is important to emphasize that, in such cases, the culture is generally considered even by religious authorities to have preceded the actual revelation of the scriptures. The cultural universe is the foundation the scriptures explicate (even if the truths presented in the scriptures are said to be eternal or timeless).

Since the underlying source of authority in these scriptures is the ongoing, tacit folk tradition itself, it is taken for granted that these scriptures can continue to develop and change, even coming to articulate fundamental religious norms radically contrary to earlier formulations. We find this, for example, in Hinduism, Shintoism, Asian Buddhism, and usually Taoism. In such cases, it is unlikely that these scriptures will become the basis for a normative reform of culture, to be used to protest the deviation of the present from the past.

Reformist Scriptural Religions and Folkist Tendencies

The scriptural traditions in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam arise out of critiques of folk culture, and the reformist potentiality is made explicit and central in them. If in all religions (as Clifford Geertz has observed) we find *models of* what is and also *models for* what should be, these reformist religions are grounded in a distinctive stress on the latter idea, religion as a model for what should be. What society ought to be is more important than what it is. The majority opinion does not rule, the norms do, and these are laid out in scriptures viewed as eternal and not subject to overturning by later revelations. These are book-religions in a special sense: their scriptures really do establish norms to which later forms of the religions must conform if they are to have legitimacy. For this reason, these religions are often grouped together as the "prophetic religions."

Of the three, the primacy of norms over general societal consensus is strongest in Judaism. Judaism therefore is different from the folkist religions and even from its daughter religions. It is the only religion in antiquity (or even in the modern period) to have arisen *de novo* by creating its own people and explicitly structuring the entire society in terms of religious norms. The ideals are at the source of the society, not the other way around. The people created by this religion had henceforth to measure up to those ideals, and it was affirmed explicitly in the originating covenant with God that folkist practices and norms were "idolatrous" and not to be accepted. The source of scriptural norms was therefore not the people but God and the one-time revelation that created the people, preserved in Judaism's scriptures. This revelation is theological at root and is not merely to be determined by social-anthropological, historical, or other folkist criteria. Indeed, it is explicitly stated that only because of excessive accommodations that diluted the norms that the people were exiled from their land. They could now exist as a distinct community only if they strenuously conformed to scriptural norms.

It may be argued to the contrary that that ancient Judaism in fact was a product of the Jewish people, and that the Torah itself was produced over many centuries by the people to express their consensus understanding of their norms and worldview. This may or may not be so, and I will return to these questions below. But it is indisputable that the account given here is the way the scriptures of Judaism explain matters: this view therefore is normative from the start of Judaism. Whenever Judaism arose, this is how it defined itself, and a phenomenological approach must take this as its primary data. Moreover, this is the way the Jews have understood themselves

through the ages. They did not and do not consider themselves to have existed as a people before the reception of Torah at Sinai. Moreover, for over 3,000 years, right up to the modern period, Jews have deemed folkist tendencies that contradict revelation to be impermissible. This remarkable and self-critical self-understanding radically affected their entire history. Without it they would not have been able to sustain their distinct character in either Canaan or the diaspora, so that there probably would have been no Judaism at all.

The Impact of Cross-Cultural Experience

Perhaps one cause for this extraordinary clarity of normative self-definition in Judaism is that specifically Jewish teachings and scriptures came into existence and persisted within a constant concourse of other cultures. Jews and Judaism did not emerge in an isolated region. On the contrary, Sinai and the land of Israel were the constant bridge and battlefield between the greatest and most self-absorbed cultures of the time, Babylonia/Assyria and Egypt.

That Judaism was formed out of a repudiation of these cultures is indicated in its own scriptures, which state that Judaism's original impulse was God's calling Abraham to leave the Babylonian cities (*Ur* literally means "City") and to become a wandering nomad. Moreover, the transformative revelation and covenant that created the people occurred in the Sinai desert to a "mixed multitude" of escaped slaves (most of them said to be Abraham's descendants) who had fled Egypt. Thus the two dominant powers of that era, Babylonia and Egypt, and indeed all pagan cultures, were rejected as models. That this astonishing repudiation was a considered one is also indicated by its qualifications: it was assumed that despite pagan cruelties and idolatries, the knowledge of God and righteousness was present in every culture from the time of Noah, and, therefore, there could be righteous people acceptable to God in any culture. Abraham hoped that even in Sodom and Gomorrah there might be such people. Other examples include Melchizedek, Jethro the Midianite (Moses' father-in-law), the Ninevites whom Jonah brought to repentance, and, perhaps most striking, Job, the model for Israel of godly righteousness, who the first sentence of the Book of Job and later Jewish tradition say was a pagan Arab. Furthermore, joining the Jewish people was presented by the Torah as always a possibility, as the mixed multitude at the time of the Exodus, Ruth, and many statements in Isaiah, Zechariah, and Micah show. The book of Jonah even indicates that entire pagan cultures can be acceptable to God if they repent of their idolatrous violence and injustice and return to God, whom they are presumed already to know. The prophets constantly come back to this affirmation and make it a cornerstone of their prophecies for the messianic era.

These ideas also underlay the self-critical emphasis of Torah tradition. It was explicitly affirmed that some Jews, even the majority in a given generation, might sin and pursue evil for the sake of convenience, to attain short-term goals, or to be like other nations. Idolatry was thought to be a temptation built into the human condition. For this reason, self-criticism was from earliest times an essential part of normative observance. There was a never-ending struggle to reform and perfect society as a whole, the prophets were enshrined in tradition as the most honored leaders, and repentance was a core value annually emphasized in festivals.

All of this suggests that a quite reflective and coherent view of other cultural options lay behind the self-definition of Judaism. And in any case, it certainly shows that biblical as well as post-Biblical Judaism rested on a normative core by which all forms of non-Jewish and especially Jewish religiosity could be measured.

The Rise of Folkist Definitions of Judaism

How is it that a very different understanding of Judaism has gained currency even among many Jews in the past century? This understanding, especially current in academic

treatments of Jewish history, assumes a folkist definition of Judaism and rejects the idea of a normative Judaism that disqualifies other forms. I believe these folkist and anti-traditional views are inseparable from, and directly indebted to, two chief sources: Christian "Old Testament" scholarship and secular, naturalistic, and anti-religious philosophies shaped by an anti-Jewish and anti-Judaic polemic in general Western culture. The two approaches, even if hostile to each other, have agreed on a hostility to Judaism and Jewish self-understanding. We need to have a clear grasp of the source of these views.

As is well-known, the modern secular understanding of biblical religion starts with the early modern polemics of Hobbes, Spinoza, Voltaire, d'Holbach, and other "enlighteners" against Judaism and its Scripture. Several factors operated in this polemic. One was simply the advocacy of egalitarian rationalism, which refused to accept the reality of cultural or ideological differences: all reasonable beings must think the same; therefore, all differences derived from irrational superstitions or dishonorable motives. The persistence of the Jews as a separate culture and society within Western societies was an offense to these thinkers, and they felt that the separatist foundations of Judaism must be undermined.[1] Strongly affecting this was the secularist attempt to replace revelation with the (modern and rational) state or the will of the people as the ultimate authority. This rendered Judaism by definition a political or folk creation, and its separate persistence a merely social phenomenon, even an arrogance. Hobbes for example, who insisted that the state should have the power to determine its citizens' religious affiliations, included his critique of Scripture in the portion of his work dealing with political theory: he tried to show that the so-called Mosaic Scripture arose from the state to begin with, taking centuries to form—therefore the state had even then the final authority. Lying behind this viewpoint was a third factor affecting the secular understanding of biblical religion: "enlighteners" resented any suggestion that there might be other ways of understanding reality besides naturalistic reason. Here, too, Judaism was seen as a major offense, both in itself and because Christianity, the chief bulwark of medieval institutions, anti-rationalism and religious "superstition," arose from it. What was being attacked, then, was the very idea of "revealed religion" as such. Judaism was the safest target, since it was the religion of a despised minority, even if the implications of the anti-Judaic polemic obviously extended to Christianity as well. It is therefore not too much to claim that the debate about Judaism's definition and the nature of its normative and scriptural authority helped to lay the foundations for modern secularism. It was a momentous controversy.

It is important to realize that although early modern enlighteners wished to protest against traditional revealed religion, many of their ideas were modulations of and resonated with age-old anti-Judaic Christian polemics. This resonance helped strengthen their impact and win them greater acceptance.

For example, a guiding assumption of Christian theologies of redemption is the claim in the Gospels that the Jewish people preferred to worship its own collective self and material well-being rather than God, which is why they crucified Christ and refused to convert to Christianity (cf., John 8:47, Mark 12:1–9, Matt. 27:25, Rom. 11, etc.). The religion of the Jewish people was thus folkist and particularistic. It consisted not of faithfulness to a transcendental God and the covenant with him but rather of devotion to "the Chosen People" and their worldly power and survival, even in defiance of God.[2]

But, as Hobbes and Spinoza show, something like this folkist explanation could also serve early modern secularists (Jewish or non-Jewish): Spinoza agreed with Hobbes that apart from the universal teachings that any reasonable person (such as himself) could live by without being Jewish, the Mosaic Scriptures chiefly consist of laws to ensure the successful socio-political organization of the Jewish people. These laws, the basis of normative Judaism, were compiled over many centuries and were therefore actually from the later Jewish people or at least their priests. The priests sought thereby to consolidate their own power; as Hobbes

had already claimed, perhaps much of "Mosaic" revelation achieved final form at the time of Ezra. To Spinoza, then, the content and purpose of revelation, apart from some elementary universal truths, is oppressively chauvinistic priestly self-preservation and glorification. (Voltaire in turn made this a central theme in his secular anti-Semitism, and it was to echo down through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in ever fiercer anti-Semitic tracts.)

Indeed, so successful were these ideas that they helped found modern Christian Old Testament scholarship. In another fruitful cross-current, this scholarship is now enshrined in the secular academies as the best authority on the rise of early Judaism. General academic introductions to the period of the Hebrew Bible structure their account around Old Testament research that emerged from Christian divinity school scholarship and agendas. It is precisely because of this that we must investigate that scholarship's assumptions before assessing its helpfulness in defining normative Judaism and before turning to clearly secularist anthropological perspectives.

"Judaism" and Old Testament Scholarship

Of course, as a broad field, many tendencies and viewpoints can be found in Old Testament studies, some more affirmative of Jewish values and others less so, some secularist and others pious. Still, its understanding of the history of Jewish religion and scriptures was deeply shaped both by traditional christian agendas and by the pioneering work of Hobbes, Spinoza, and other anti-Church enlighteners. As is the case with every academic discipline, the basic terminology of Old Testament studies gives important insights into what *Tendenz* underlies the entire field. Thus, it is striking how many terms, including those describing scripture itself, the God, land, people, and religion of ancient Israel are anachronistic and explicitly anti-phenomenological, ignoring and implicitly rejecting Judaism's values and normative self-understandings. Most of these terms first appeared in the context of early Christian theologies of history and polemical self-definition, and thus they are in the first instance Christian-referential. Taken together, they produce a radical de-Judaization of the religion, culture, and even people of ancient Israel, removing Jews and Judaism from their own formative religious history and replacing them with proto-Christians. Nothing like this can be found in the Western academic treatment of any other religion.[3] Judaism and Jewry, in this approach, become a late, degenerate, and perhaps even marginal development in their own tradition, while Christianity emerges as a reform movement reviving the earlier purer prophetic religion. For more liberal Christian scholars, these terms illustrate the evolution of Christianity out of a pagan Israelite religion, from which again Judaism and Jews are a late and questionable offshoot.

The agenda is clear in the very designation of the scriptures of Judaism as the Old Testament, which suggests that they were merely an early stage in the evolution of a clarified revelation and spirituality, leading inexorably to the New Testament. A common alternative designation, "Law," uses a key term from the Pauline epistles. But even Christian scholars acknowledge that this is not an accurate translation of the term found in the Bible itself, namely, *Torah*, which means "Teaching." To insist that Torah means "Law" not in a cosmic but a particularistic and punitive sense (as Paul constantly defines it) goes against the Hebrew and serves a polemic that separates "Law" from "Grace," particularism from universalism, and that attaches the latter in each case to Christianity. Thus it has much the same negative and subordinating implications as "Old Testament." Torah as "Law" sustains the assertion that Judaism is legalistic and priestly, external, socially oriented, and not spiritual or prophetic. Since 1945, some O.T. scholars have started to call their subject the "Hebrew Scriptures," but "Jewish Scriptures" is out of the question—for reasons directly related to our topic.

It is not surprising, then, that the god allegedly worshipped in the Old Testament is not familiar to later Jewry, either. Depending on the reconstruction, the Old Testament portrayed a God of vengeful wrath,

and justice, whose nature was later refined in the New Testament's God of love. Alternatively the Jewish scriptures centered on a pagan and even polytheistic divinity, a national god called "Yahweh" allegedly identical to such other national gods as Chemosh of the Moabites. Not incidentally, even the seemingly minor terminological practice in Old Testament studies of constantly referring familiarly to *Yahweh* (not *Elohim*, "God," or even *Adonai*, "Lord"), violating the Ten Commandments' prohibition, bluntly rejects religious Jewish sensitivities and discourages the participation of religious Jews in the discipline.

However, according to Old Testament scholarly terminology, the very people of their study were not really Jews. So the objections of later Jewry are irrelevant. Actually and "objectively," it is said, there were only the "Israelites" or "Hebrews," who are best to be understood in terms of their neighbors—Canaanites, Moabites, Edomites, Babylonians or Egyptians, even modern Arab Bedouins—but not later Jews.

Not only were there no Jews, there was also no "land of Israel," Israel, or Judea that embraced all Israelites until the post-Exilic period. Not even the term "Canaan," used in the Bible, is preferred. The "Israelites" or "Hebrews" instead lived in a land called "Palestine," according to Old Testament scholarly convention. But this term, of later Greek not Hebrew derivation, was applied to Judea by the Romans in the second century C.E. to wipe out the memory of the over 1,400 years of Jewish occupation. It showed Roman hostility to Jewish self-determination, and was so late and inauthentic the term "Palestine" is not even used in the New Testament itself.[4]

Since the Biblical people were not "Jews," naturally their religion could not be called "Judaism." This would be anachronistic, which is suddenly not acceptable. Instead, they followed "Israelite religion" (terms that also did not exist in pre-Exilic times either). This Israelite religion must have been similar to its neighbors (though strangely they had no Torahs nor Diaspora).[5] It is usually claimed that there was a gradual evolution from paganism to Judaism, contradicting the Torah's account of a radical break that occurred at Sinai. The strength of this consensus, despite the ambiguity or absence of evidence for it, contrasts oddly with the equally strong consensus that radical cultural and religious innovations associated with remarkable personalities certainly occurred in other cases, for example in ancient Greece, or in the rise and development of Christianity itself. (It also contrasts with the near silence in mainstream New Testament scholarship about pagan sources for the distinctive forms of earliest Christianity.) The consensus on gradualism and pagan influences in the case of ancient Israel therefore conforms to deeper paradigms controlling this field.[6]

So Judaism allegedly began only after almost the entire Old Testament was finished. It first appears at or following the Babylonian Exile in the sixth century B.C.E., or at the time of Ezra and his disciples of the fifth century, when the Pentateuch allegedly was finally redacted. A few scholars have even claimed that the entire Hebrew Bible is a work of fiction composed in the Hellenistic period.[7] Many add there was no agreed form of Judaism in the Second Commonwealth, so normative Judaism crystallizes fully only in Rabbinic circles around 200 C.E., post-dating Christianity. Thus Christianity is really a "sibling" religion, coeval with Judaism, not its offshoot. Christianity, then, has at least equal claim to represent and continue Israelite religion and the Old Testament.[8]

Most Old Testament scholars, however, still characterize "Judaism" as arising in the post-Exilic period. In consonance with this, it was common until quite recently to speak of "Early Judaism" as arising in Ezra's time but of "Late Judaism" as developed already by the end of the Second Commonwealth period (in "Pharisaism"). In this case, normative "Judaism" had at best only about five hundred years of real vitality. In the schema of many of these scholars, Jesus repudiated this Pharisaic Late Judaism in favor of the prophetic religion it had suppressed. Christianity, accordingly, is the legitimate successor to the prophetic-spiritual current of Israelite religion, a current crushed by Ezra and "Judaism."

None of this can be justified on any solid evidential basis, since even the hard evidence adduced by several generations of

Old Testament scholarship need not lead to their conclusions, as just outlined. The radical and artificial separation between pre-Exilic religion and post-Exilic Judaism (and between "priestly Law" and "prophetic faith," etc.) is imposed on the material. The sources much more often depict continuities in these matters than discontinuities. The scriptural record gives the portrait of a single people, an ongoing tradition, and a single religion.

Long before the post-Exilic period, the prophets took for granted that the entire people understood that they had entered into a covenant with God, a covenant that detailed social, moral, and religious norms that applied to the society as a whole. Social legislation was a part of this from the beginning. This covenantal tradition in its fullness, already in the historical narratives and pre-Exilic prophets, called "the Torah of Moses" and "God's Torah" (1 Kings 2:3; 2 Kings 10:31; 14:6; 17:13; 21:8; 23:25; Is. 1:10; 2:3; 5:24; Jer. 8:8; 9:13; 44:23; Hos. 4:6; 8:1; Amos 2:4; etc.) was traced back to Sinai and celebrated in religious festivals. All of this remains the same after Ezra. From the start, the covenant was only with *Y-H-V-H*, by preference called *Adonai*, "the Lord," and *Elohim*, "God," to the exclusion of other divinities. This alone was specifically Israel's God. Whether at first henotheistically or otherwise, this God was praised by the prophets and priests as all-powerful creator of the entire universe, as shown among other things by his power over Assyria and Egypt: he could call upon and remove his servants from those lands, overwhelming gentile rulers who resisted. That there was Jewish idolatry and assimilation to polytheistic practices emanating from other peoples in and about ancient Israel is emphasized in the Scriptures themselves, so the surprisingly slight archaeological or other evidences for such practices does not contradict the Scriptural version. If anything, it confirms that polytheistic practices were much rarer than the prophets might lead us to believe. That means that, whether pre- or post-Exilic, biblical Judaism is one continuous tradition. And it flows directly into post-biblical Judaism. Normative Judaism, in short, goes back to the early biblical period.

It is important to clarify just what is being claimed here. Samuel Sandmel, in his survey *The Hebrew Scriptures* (New York, 1978), after quoting the remark by "one Jewish scholar . . . that 'the Higher Criticism is higher anti-Semitism,'" goes on to defend Old Testament studies, saying that while some leading scholars in that field were "psychotic Jew-haters," they were few, and (p. 19):

> Higher Criticism is a process, not a conclusion. The discipline itself stands or falls on its rightness or wrongness, not on the personal foibles of its practitioners. . . . To label the Higher Critics anti-Semites is silly. Indeed, a more devastating judgment can be passed on the nineteenth century Higher Critics by demonstrating that their scholarship, however laborious and vaunted, was often shabby and that they were seldom able to rise above their own presuppositions and intellectual biases. Modern biblical scholarship, however, inevitably uses nineteenth-century scholarship as a point of departure. To ignore it is as grievous an error in judgment as never to depart from it.

All this is true. But it is superficial in one crucial respect. It fails to recognize how current understandings are still shaped by the earlier agendas. The issue goes beyond the anti-Semitism of many leading scholars (Sandmel trivializes that as "personal foibles"!). Fortunately, the pervasive anti-Semitism of the nineteenth century and first half of the twentieth century no longer dominates the discipline. The work today is informed by integrity, good will, and often astonishing industry and ingenuity. But most scholars have not and perhaps cannot escape the theological presuppositions laid down by earlier generations, for these presuppositions still provide the underpinnings for the entire discipline and have not really been questioned even today. The denigrating of all terms relating to the Jewish people, land, religion, scripture, and even God, is too consistent to be coincidental. It is these categories and their assumptions which are anti-Judaic.

The remarks made here do not call into question any particular findings of scholarship in regard to ancient Israel and its religion, insofar as these findings are substantive and not the product of bias. Nevertheless,

the continuing acceptance of fundamental categories that de-Judaize the material cast into doubt the good faith of the entire enterprise and its most general conclusions concerning the history and nature of Judaism.

The Reduction of Religion to a Cultural-Spiritual Style

Another major source of contemporary understandings of the nature of "Judaism(s)" is scholarship driven by a historicistic and relativistic outlook, which tends to reject talk of an underlying Judaism common to diverse historical contexts. Each context, instead, is said to dictate its own "Judaism," so that there are multiple Judaisms, not one overarching form. Of course, in making such a claim, this approach, which boasts a close attention to the actuality of each historical form of Jewish religion, actually denies the chief claim found in every one of them, namely, that each participates in the same transcendental realities and fundamental sources of Judaism that all other forms of Judaism share. Cultural relativism can often produce the antithesis of a phenomenological sensitivity to a group's actual religious interests and claims. But, in any case, the basic assumption of the secularist and relativist approach is that each cultural or spiritual style constitutes its own religion, and, since there have been many cultural-spiritual styles in the history of Judaism, it is concluded that there have been many Judaisms.

But a religion is not a cultural-spiritual style. That is an important component of religion, but by itself it does not constitute any particular religion. In fact, very often the same cultural style in a country or era may affect very different religions, sometimes in clear contradiction to their own basic beliefs and practices. Thus, the history of Judaism indicates that it, like other religions, has been deeply affected by the cultural-spiritual styles of its environment. For example, it is generally accepted that the almost pantheistic asceticism of the twelfth century German Hasidim, so different from the world-affirmations of Talmudic times or of modern Judaism, was strongly affected by a cultural mood dominant in that entire age, which also showed itself in Franciscan Catholicism, Albigensian Gnosticism, and in Sufi Islam. Rabbis in this period often praised other-worldly self-lacerating penitence and exemplary martyrdoms. Similarly, the changing cultural-spiritual style of modern Judaism very closely echoes the wider transformations of the secular-Protestant culture dominant in western lands over the past two centuries. The contemptuous treatment of Kabbalah by German scholars of the nineteenth century versus the reverential treatment of Kabbalah by American, Israeli, and other scholars in the late twentieth century are striking indices of the regnant cultural styles of wider society at those times.

Perhaps the tendency to confuse cultural-spiritual style with religion *per se* and to over-emphasize what are sometimes quite transient folkist understandings is to a degree the result of too uncritical an acceptance of contemporary cultural anthropological approaches to religion. Cultural anthropology has certainly greatly enriched our understanding of religious processes, but here we find the limitations of that approach. Cultural anthropology begins with a reduction of religion and spirituality to socio-cultural dynamics. It does not teach respect for the transcendental referent of religious worship; rather it attempts to supplant this with reference back to the believers themselves. Transcendence disappears in such a reduction. Let us take as an instance Clifford Geertz's justly celebrated definition of religion, which more than most other anthropological theories reaches toward a phenomenological appreciation of the specifically religious element in religion:

> A religion is a system of symbols which acts to establish powerful, pervasive, and long-lasting moods and motivations in men by formulating conceptions of a general order of existence and clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic.[9]

This definition replaces reference to reality with references to subjectivities: "conceptions" of existence given an "aura of factuality" that "seem . . . realistic" enough to create "moods and motivations." The subjective effect is the real object of religion, or culture as such. After all, what else could we expect "Religion as a Cultural System"

(the title of Geertz's essay) to be? But if cultural moods are the essence of religion, and the specific beliefs, myths, and practices of a particular religion are merely symbols of those cultural moods, what is the difference between ancient Indo-European Zoroastrianism, Manichaeanism, central Asian Buddhism, medieval and modern Iranian Shi'ism? Very little, since the cultural moods and motivations are the same: there is only one Iranian religion despite various names and forms. How can we justly distinguish between German Hasidism, Franciscan Catholicism, and medieval Sufism, since they all share a similar symbolical mood? We cannot.

Or rather: the religions are in fact very different, and their members live for those differences. Each makes of their common mood something distinctive in the whole context of that religion, and the common mood can vanish while the religion continues on practically unchanged, to accommodate other moods or cultural-spiritual styles in other times or places. Geertz himself showed this in a brilliant contrast of the very different Moroccan and Indonesian cultural styles of Islam.[10] In the one cultural area (such as Iran), even the purpose to which the similar mood is put differs in accordance with the religion. Zoroastrianism elevated the farming life to cosmological and salvific dimensions. Manichaeism and Central Asian Buddhism valued celibacy and radical other-worldliness. Contemporary Shi'ite religion in Iran stresses nationalism and military aggression, even terrorism. Moreover, we can find quite different moods or cultural styles in different members of the same community (even sometimes in the same congregation or in the same person at different times in her or his life). We cannot say that each mood or cultural outlook is a different religion. Religion is more than that. How then, if we want to understand "normative religion," are we to define "religion"?

A Phenomenological Definition of Religion

Joachim Wach offers a useful starting point. His definition has the merit of taking seriously the specifically religious dimension of religion, that is, the realities the believers themselves hold to be central. It also hints at the dialogical way in which religious realities create or define believers, as much as believers create or define religious realities. Religion, to summarize Wach, is the total response to a reality apprehended as ultimate.[11] That reality is not only apprehended as ultimate and supreme but also as the source from which the religious person comes or that bestows identity and meaning. As such, the primal dialogue of self/group with the transcendental source engages and helps shape social, cultural, psychological, philosophical, and every other dimension of human existence, and brings those dimensions into connection with the fundamental realities apprehended as determinative. The term "apprehended" is meant to indicate that the response goes beyond a narrow intellectual belief or social datum: instead the reality is actually experienced as engaging multiple levels of personal and group existence. There are, then, three chief elements to religion: (1) ultimate and supreme reality, (2) those who apprehend this reality, and (3) the specific apprehension itself that engages the other two together in interaction.

Let us apply this to Judaism. The Jewish version of Wach's three chief elements are God, Israel, and the Torah covenant. The reality apprehended is God, the person(s) apprehending this reality is (are) Israel, and the medium and form of this apprehension or dialogue is Torah. Torah, (God's) "Teaching," is the most crucial element and the central pivot of Judaism, for it provides the framework for the interaction of the other two. It also defines the two partners in dialogue. It even presents and is the archetypal dialogue itself. As such it governs all later interactions between God and Israel. The adequacy of a given version of Judaism must be measured by its adherence to this Torah framework for dialogue between God and Israel.

Since this is what defines normative Judaism in the sources that guide each generation, we find that, down through history, all generally accepted forms of Judaism share this framework. This not only constitutes biblical Judaism (without distinction between

pre- and post-Exilic forms), but also all post-biblical Judaism. We can go further: those forms that lack some element in this framework may make a claim to be Jewish but fail to persuade other Jews and soon either disappear or cease to be considered, even by their own adherents, Jewish or part of Judaism, the religion constitutive of Jewish identity. Thus the sociological dimension of Judaism ultimately follows the archetypal one, since every Jewish community has its final point of reference in the Torah that presents these archetypes. This is not a theological assertion but a phenomenological and historical one, even if the Torah, which is the touchstone, is a theological text.

The Torah as the Core of Normative Judaism

At the heart of the Torah is the covenant between God and Israel established at the start of the history of the Jewish people, at Sinai, and celebrated in its festival cycle. The Torah presents and constitutes this covenant in definitive terms.

Accordingly, Judaism arises in the course of a constructive dynamic that constitutes each partner for the other. At Sinai, the God of creation and history entered into a binding covenant with a "mixed multitude" who, through this covenant alone, became an actual and real people, the people Israel. Only through this covenant can Israel be a "blessing for the nations of the world." Without the covenant, as the Torah and the later prophets ceaselessly reiterate, Israel again disintegrates into a mixed multitude enslaved to the idolatries of the surrounding cultures. This means that Israel's essential identity is located in its covenant. The Torah consists not only of teachings about creation and the primal history of humanity, thus justifying the role of the people Israel, but it also elaborates this covenant into a vision of an entire society, indicating how the people Israel should comport itself in ethics, cult, and legal traditions. The explicitly normative commandments thereby create an entire society that is to be a "kingdom of priests." These commandments flesh out the covenant and constitute the people as the people of the covenant.

Such an understanding does not require us to posit that the Torah as we have it was all literally revealed at Sinai. It is quite possible to accommodate to this view the better established results of scholarship regarding the evolution of the Torah's text. For even if we suppose that the Torah as we have it took centuries to crystallize, the covenant is assumed even by Israel's earliest writings, and all the prophets certainly take for granted such a covenant with the entire Jewish people. The fact that they did not need to explain to their audience in much detail the basis of their appeals and demands shows that all understood their ancient covenantal context as axiomatic. The antiquity of the Sinai experience is also strikingly borne out by the festival cycle, which is structured as a single symbolic whole centered on the covenant. Although this was not adequately understood by earlier scholarship, even the number of days between the festivals testifies to their derivation at Sinai: they correspond exactly to the numbers of days that, according to the Torah, separate the crucial events of Exodus and revelation, stretching over some seven months. The annual cycle recapitulates and represents the Exodus-Sinai covenantal history precisely as given in the Mosaic books. This means the Torah did not reinterpret already fixed Canaanite folk celebrations piece-meal over many centuries. On the contrary, Israel's salvation-history provided their basic framework from the start.[12] In any case, as written down and crystallized in the Five Books of Moses, the Torah is Israel's covenant writ large, and it is this Scripture that will forever define both parties to the covenant, God and Israel.

As presented in the Torah, the revelation at Sinai is nothing less than the culmination of all history up to that point, the very purpose and fulfillment of the creation of the universe. It has truly ultimate status. No form of religion can be Judaism if this covenant-Torah and what follows from it for God and Israel are not given central authority.

We now turn to the "Israel" part of normative Judaism. It is necessary to underline that the covenant demands to be actualized within a real people. The people "Israel" is not in the first instance a metaphor or

spiritual simile. It is a real people, which is why the commandments given at Sinai structure the civil and political structures of a society, not just individual pieties. This society, Israel, must be given its own land in which to live, the land of Israel, which is why entry into the land must follow after acceptance of Torah at Sinai. The land is also not first of all a symbol but a political reality. The prophets made their appeals to an entire society, calling not for individual reformation alone but above all for a more general social renewal. It is also because of this reality of an actual people in an actual land that Exile can take on such powerful meaning in later Judaism and that the hope for messianic peace builds explicitly on the restoration of the people to their land.

It is also because a real and actual people is involved that the Torah must from the start deal with the fact that not all Israel will be faithful to the covenant. This question of what to make of apostasy and falling away into the religious practices of surrounding cultures arises in the foundation era of the covenant itself, and the answers given there control later Jewish ways of dealing with internal diversities. The Torah presents a way not of sectarian extremes but of responsibility for a whole people. That is why the later prophets persist in addressing the entire people and their kings. They do not focus on an elite or the solitary contemplative. An entire people must be brought together in common responsibilities. This people was created by the Torah but once created takes its place among and is affected by other peoples. An ambivalent status of holy and profane therefore attaches to the people: when they live up to the covenant, they are truly a kingdom of priests and a chosen people (*am segulah*, treasured people); when they do not, they may be chastised by God even more strictly than non-Jews. Not every religious, ethical, or social practice of Jews can be called Jewish. The Torah is not a folkist document, to use our earlier terminology. But it addresses a folk and participates in their history. Even if individuals or groups fall away into the practices of the surrounding cultures, as the Torah says they will, they remain in some way part of the people Israel, sinners within the wider society of Israel. This conception of a faithful core and an errant periphery still tied to the core has extraordinarily important consequences for later understandings of Judaism and the Jewish people.

The historians and later priestly and prophetic writers whose works fill so many pages of the Hebrew Scriptures for the most part develop the implications of the normative core described here as already present in the Sinai covenant. They seek to show the validation of its clauses in the twists and turns of the post-Sinai history of Israel. The prophets apply the covenantal framework to the history of their own time and further elaborate on how the past promises will be fulfilled in a future messianic restoration of the people to their land, following the people's true repentance and reform. This does not modify the Sinai covenant or religion but merely supplements it, confirming its continuing centrality and application.

The Distinction Between Foundation and Superstructure

These are some of the chief characteristics of the normative structure of Judaism. One might suppose that because the covenant deals with all aspects of life, including the family, festivals, civil law, and priestly rituals, the forms the religion can take must be very limited. This impression, as history confirms, is mistaken. Rather, the normative core provides a firm foundation and a framework on which many different superstructures can be built. If we say that the normative structures provide a house within which Jews can live their Judaism, we still have many possibilities for how many floors there shall be, what the walls and ceiling will look like, what kind of roof will cover it all, and even how the façade will look. Ornamentation and extensions might be added or even whole wings. But these do not change the underlying structure even if they obscure it.

In fact, it is precisely due to faithful adherence to the underlying structure of tradition that the variations in superstructure occur. Were Judaism not to be faithfully

practiced as a living religion, there would be no change in its contours. The same piety that insists on loyalty to the ancestral heritage guarantees its constant adaptation. The antithesis between continuity and change is in many ways a false one.

> There is an old story of an axe that had been in a family for many generations. Each generation inherited the axe, used it, and, as a cherished family heirloom, passed it along to the next generation. Recently, an old drawing of the axe was discovered, showing it as it had been originally. To the surprise of the current owners, the original was much smaller, perhaps one-half the size of what it is now, and with a smaller blade as well. Other records indicated that in the past two hundred years, the axe handle had been replaced ten times and the blade five times.[13]

Precisely because the axe continued to be used in actual life in devoted faithfulness to the functional role it played in former generations, it changed its outward form. Only if it had been put aside and never used would the axe have remained "precisely the same" as it had been formerly. If it had been put on a shelf to be worshipped together with the ancestors, or if it had been put into a museum, then it would have stayed superficially exactly the same axe for centuries. But in actuality, it would have ceased to be the family's axe and instead would have become an artifact of earlier ages, not this one, referring to the dead, not the living. Different outward forms over time thus need not mean that the normative core ceases to exist. The opposite may be true.

Applying these criteria, it will be seen that Ethiopian, Sadducean, and Karaite Judaism all conform to normative Judaism, as does, of course, Rabbinic Judaism. These forms of Judaism differ precisely because each has sought to be faithful to and to apply the normative core to their lives and environments. Naturally, divergences arise in different historical settings, reflecting the lives and real interactions involved. But all of them accept the three basic elements and make them the center of their religion and practice. Only the superstructure elaborates this differently. Rabbinic leaders, who created the historically dominant understanding of Judaism, might cast doubt on the correctness of the other groups' Jewish observance and might set up barriers to marriage into them, but not even this has been consistent. In all three cases, the barriers to marriage generally proved to be permeable. Members of these groups were judged even by the rabbis to be part of the Jewish people, recipients of the commonly shared Torah, and therefore participants in the same religion. And these groups granted the same status to Rabbinic Jews, accepting that they shared a common heritage and peoplehood. The richness of Judaism in history arises from the faithfulness of Jews to the shared normative core.

Is Christianity a Normative Successor to Biblical Judaism?

Examples of border-line cases will clarify things and indicate the importance of the distinctions made above. Each is borderline in a different way. Our examples will be Christianity, Samaritanism, and Yiddishism. Each has been claimed to be a legitimate inheritor of biblical Judaism. Christianity is of course a distinct religion, with major indebtedness to Judaism but also many differences from it; Samaritanism is much more similar to Judaism and has had a much more ambiguous history of relationships with it; and Yiddishism may stand for the many forms of secular Jewish ideologies that have sprung up in the modern period, which some Jews have asserted are as much "Judaism" as traditional piety.

We take up Christianity first. At issue is how far we can distinguish Christianity from Judaism, either in Christianity's early forms or in the guise of "Messianic Judaism" or "Jews for Jesus" today. Is Christianity perhaps even a "sibling" of Rabbinic Judaism, with equal claim to inherit earlier biblical Judaism? Applying our criteria, the answer is clear. Christianity in none of its forms qualifies as either Judaism or its "sibling." While deeply indebted to biblical Judaism, Christianity so changes each of the three basic elements of normative Judaism that it is rightly viewed as a different religion.

First of all, the God is very different, a triune divinity, and one of the three modalities is a divine human being, something

inconceivable within normative Judaism. The transcendent God found in the "Old Testament," who created the universe, formed Israel, and bestowed the Torah, is generally identified by Christians with only one modality of the triune God, the one termed "God the Father," and God the Father has only secondary importance compared with God the Son, who became a human being, "died," and then was resurrected so as to become a universal savior. In this modality, God is allegedly revealed for the first time, or in perfected form, as filled with grace, love, and compassion, in contrast to the Old Testament God.

Salvation, according to Christianity, can be attained not through belief in God the Father alone, nor even in following the Torah commandments, but only through accepting Jesus Christ, God the Son, and acknowledging the atoning effect of his crucifixion and resurrection in divine form. Only then is there a saving experience of God the Holy Spirit. From a traditional Jewish perspective, all this is totally alien. There are no dying-and-rising gods, no divine humans, in the Torah. If we look for antecedents, however, it is evident that such a conception of God would have seemed natural within the pagan religions all around ancient Israel. Divinization of human beings was commonplace. Moreover, these religions were increasingly being refined into philosophical monotheism and had long known as their central revivifying drama the cycle of the dying and rising god.[14] It is significant that the mystery of the Mass, in which Christ via his death becomes wafer and wine, providing congregants a feast on the divine body through which eternal life is shared, has no parallels in Jewish ritual. Indeed, drinking any kind of blood and eating human flesh, whether actually or symbolically, or partaking of God in a feast, would be repugnant to Jewish values as laid down in the Torah. But the Mass shares a family resemblance with the central rituals of the mysteries of Isis and Osirus, of Demeter and Persephone, of Dionysius (who lives again in the wine), and of Mithras. Furthermore, until the Protestant Reformation, almost all Christians added to or associated with their incarnate but triune God the Virgin Mary, whose images were vehicles for prayer to her and worship. Prayer to her was on a different, lower level of divinity from the Trinity, though higher than prayer to the saints. All of these phenomena quite obviously differ from the normative Torah view of God. In Christianity, then, we find an evident synthesis of pagan and Jewish ideas about God. This was explicitly asserted to be a novel revelation and essential to the "New" Covenant that bound Christians together. Only adherence to this new Covenant "saves."

Thus the view of Torah is also different from that of Judaism. The Torah in its fuller sense as Hebrew Scriptures is no longer the central framework within which all dialogue with God is conducted. Instead, the Torah is associated with another scripture, the "New Testament," just as in the Trinity the Jewish God is associated with a different kind of divinity. In both cases, the Jewish version becomes subordinated to the Christian one, which takes center stage. The "New Covenant" perfects, fulfills, and supplants the old Covenant at Sinai. Therefore the Torah's commandments, which flow from life with God, are no longer valid or efficacious. The age of Torahpiety is past. Christ came to free humanity from the "curse" of the Law, as also from sin and death: the antitheses are related together both by Paul and the later Church. This does not mean that "the Law" is to be entirely dismissed, according to Paul, for it was a necessary preliminary to the fuller revelation of the New Testament and still offers guidance and inspiration. Christian Jews might perhaps still hold to it (although Paul himself only does so among Jews, the better to win them over), but gentiles absolutely must not. They should not convert to it or become Jews. They should rather become members of a different group, that is, Christians.

In the light of this, we cannot be surprised that the third element of normative Judaism is also transformed: the people Israel. The New Testament makes much of breaking out of the concept of a particular people into a universal church (e.g., Gal. 3:28). The new Christian community is not part of the "children of Israel according to the flesh" (Rom. 9:8, cf., 8:3–9) but constitutes the "spiritual children of Israel," a

community that rapidly becomes almost entirely gentile. This is seemingly an oxymoron: a gentile Israel? Nevertheless, Paul tells us, a gentile branch has been grafted onto the old tree trunk of Israel, establishing a universal community to which everyone must belong if they wish to be saved (Rom. 11:17–20; Gal. 3:29): this and this alone is the Christian "Israel" that will be rewarded by the messianic blessings promised in the Torah. The true Israel is a symbolic, transnational, cultic Church, not a real people, and it therefore must accept and accommodate the diverse social structures and laws of gentile nations. The old Israel, the Jewish people, insofar as it retains its integrity and its loyalty to the Torah and its God and refuses to merge with the Church community, may even be considered "enemies" of God (Rom. 11:28, but, cf., 11:11). It is the recipient of the old curses against errant Israel, while the universal Israel receives the blessings. The Jewish people are guilty of knowingly killing the messiah (Matt. 27:24–25; Luke 23; John 8:37–44, 18:19–23, etc.): they are like greedy tenants who conspire together to murder the owner's son but by this lose their right to the vineyard (Matt. 21:33–46; Mark 12:1–12; Luke 20:9–19). The Christian "spiritualization" of Israel abolishes the need for a messianic restoration of Jews to the land of Israel. The home of Israel could be universalized and relocated in Rome, at the heart of the Roman Empire, or at Byzantium. In the End of Days, the last survivors of the Jewish people, the Old Israel, will convert and join the New Israel of the spirit. But, then, they shall be Christians of course.

We have, on the one hand, the one God, the actual Jewish people, and the Torah as the framework for their dialogue, in normative Judaism, and, on the other hand, in normative Christianity, a triune God who includes a dying-and-rising Christ, a gentile Church claiming to be the true, spiritual Israel, and a New Testament with Old Testament preliminaries as the framework for Church-God dialogue. The two religions clearly have different frameworks. They are not siblings, nor can it be said that Christianity arises out of but remains true to the framework of normative Judaism, whether biblical or post-biblical.

This conclusion throws light on the much debated issue of why and when Christianity became a distinct and separate religion. Many Christian scholars have assumed that the cause cannot be in Christianity, for it supposedly emerged organically and authentically out of Jewish religion. The separation, then, was brought about by Jewish persecution of Christians, as evidenced, for example, in the *birkat ha-minim*, the blessing against sectarians added to the worship service by the rabbis.[15] This assumes that without this "rejection," there would have been no separate Christian religion at all. But the logic of our discussion is that this was always impossible. The difference of Christianity from normative Judaism was too radical and too basic. A breakaway of Christians was inevitable, for internal Christian reasons. Paul, the final gentile additions to Matthew, and the Gospel of John all make this clear. If the Christian sectarians had really wanted to continue Judaism, and the supposed anathema had actually occurred, they could have formed their own synagogues and as such stayed Jewish sectarians. But they did not choose to do so, for good reasons. Instead they insisted on the distinctiveness of the new salvific doctrine and community of the "New Covenant," which excluded Jews and Judaism.

These comments do not apply to the Jamesian community in Jerusalem, whose main difference from other forms of Pharisaic Judaism seems to have been a conviction that the messiah had already arrived. Different opinions on the identity of the messiah have never been sufficient to violate the three basic elements in normative Judaism. Of course, the Jamesian community apparently did not believe that Jesus was God or that the Torah covenant was superseded, either of which would have put them outside of normative Judaism.

Samaritanism and Normative Judaism

The Samaritans form another special case. While Christianity clearly changes all of the essential elements of normative Judaism, Samaritanism at first glance changes none. That is, it affirms the same God, as delineated in the same Torah, and acknowledges

the same people. Yet appearances are not necessarily correct. After all, the Samaritan Torah is not quite the same: there are some three thousand divergences in it from the Jewish Torah. While these are mostly minor, the most crucial of them declares Shechem, not Jerusalem, the holy center of proper worship. As a consequence, the people of the covenant could be understood to be quite separate from the Jews. This crucial difference between the two communities eventually became decisive. It is relevant that 2 Kings 17 asserts that the Assyrians settled other peoples in the former kingdom of Israel, in Samaria, and these polytheists sought to placate "the god of the land," namely Israel's God. The Samaritans themselves are alleged to confess their alien parentage (Ezra 4:2; see also 4:8–10 and the possible Samaritan self-definition as non-Jews at 4:12). Whether or not this is factual, it is important that the Bible distinguishes Jews and Samaritans, suggesting that the Samaritans at first even misunderstood Israel's God. This means that in Samaritanism, all three essential elements—Torah, people, and possibly God—are modified.

The question of whether these modifications are so significant as to create a distinct religion was not answered definitively for many centuries. There has always been an ambiguity recognized by other Jews to the separate status of the Samaritans, even after the split became open and formal (probably in the second century B.C.E., the result of a war between Samaritans and Jews).[16] Although the separate status of their religion was affirmed, and notwithstanding continuing political, cultural, and other tensions, including warfare, positive statements about their piety can be found in the Talmud and later Rabbinic literature. The agreement of both the Jewish and the Samarian authorities that the Samaritans are a separate people placed them definitively outside of Judaism. But because they for the most part followed the same Torah, the communities never were seen as entirely unrelated. There remains a certain ambiguity to Samaritan status even today, and the Samaritans have accepted some intermarriage with Jews in Israel, although they are much less open to intermarriage with Muslims and Christians.

Yiddishism and Normative Judaism

The case of Yiddishism is much easier. Like normative Judaism, Yiddishism includes a cultural world-view and way of life, and it defines "a new people Israel, this one a component in the united working people of the world."[17] But each of these differs from the essential elements in normative Judaism, namely, God (rather than a naturalistic or atheistic "world-view"), Torah (rather than a folkist eastern European "way of life"), and Israel (rather than the eastern European Jewish strand of the world proletariat). In Yiddishism, we find more of a cultural/spiritual folk style than a religion *per se*. The "scientific socialist modernity" it espouses is generally understood by its advocates to be vehemently hostile to all religion, including Judaism. We might wish, despite this, to characterize the socialist outlook as a religion, but, if so, it is a different religion from Judaism, with a different set of adherents.

It has been argued that Judaism is not really a religion either: the very idea of Judaism as a religion emerged, according to this argument, from "a peculiarly nineteenth century and Protestant view of matters. . . . But that conception . . . imposes on Jews categories alien to their diverse historical cultural expressions."[18] These points correctly characterize certain aspects of the general contemporary understanding of religion. But their force in regard to Judaism is to a degree vitiated by the age-old Jewish insistence that God is the source of and is central to everything normative in the tradition, that from God, Torah and Israel gain their identities, and that all three together structure Jewish beliefs, practices and rituals, and Jewish peoplehood. These affirmations are not nineteenth century Protestant inventions but are authentic Judaic teachings common to all forms of Judaism up to the present time. When it exorcises God, and with God, of necessity the Torah, Yiddishism ceases to be part of normative Judaism, and this was recognized by the leading Yiddishists themselves.

Yet this does not mean that Yiddishists can escape the umbrella of Judaism, at least insofar as the teachings of normative Judaism are concerned. They remain "Jews" and share the fate and vocation of Israel, according

to the normative Judaism that they themselves reject. Precisely because they cannot create their own Judaism, nor write their own Torah, they are impotent before the foundational sources of Judaism and its normative definitions. Those sources impute an identity that transcends even the Yiddishists own self-determination. And so we find that both Jews and non-Jews view Yiddishists within the larger Judaic context, often to the Yiddishists' own intense frustration. If there really were as many Judaisms as there are groups made up of Jews, or opinions held by individual Jews, the inability of any one group of Jews to actualize its own separate self-definition would be more of a puzzle than it is. This helps explain why groups of Jews who reject the foundational elements of Judaism have ended up either entirely fading away, or at least, being lost to Judaism and the Jewish people. This contrasts sharply with the astonishing tenacity of normative Judaism in its various forms.

Conclusion

A great deal is gained by the definition of normative Judaism outlined here. First and most important, it takes seriously what Jewish sources themselves say, and what Jews who have held to those sources have said in every form of Judaism up to (and including) the modern age. This approach, that is, is phenomenological rather than reductionistic. As such, it rejects definitions of Judaism that reflect alien and sometimes anti-Judaic agendas, whether Christian theological or secular relativist. Second, by virtue of the phenomenological approach, we can take seriously the transcendentalist, prophetic, book-centered, and reformist aspects of Judaism in a way that folkist, relativistic, and reductionistic definitions cannot.

Third, this approach reveals what all forms of Judaism hold in common. Ethiopian Judaism, Karaite Judaism, and Rabbinic Judaism are viewed as modalities of "normative Judaism." The use of an adjective to indicate a variety of the noun "Judaism" is justified. The same holds for contemporary forms, such as Orthodox, Conservative, and liberal Judaism. Each must justify itself to the others in terms of the basic normative Judaism they all share. Our approach also demonstrates that fervent piety itself must lead to change (and divergence) in the superstructure of Judaism over time, without abandoning normative Judaism. The forms are divergent *because* of loyalty to normative Judaism. This is important. It would be ironic if the very loyalty of Jews to Judaism and its ongoing vitality and persistence in different situations and ages were to be made evidence that there is no such thing as Judaism but only Judaisms.

Fourth, this approach allows us to understand how even Jews who follow non-Judaic forms of piety can be part of Judaism. The Torah sets at least some of the ground-rules for how to view diverse approaches to Judaism, so that this is part of the normative structure of Judaism itself. The primal Jewish sources explicitly critique folkist and paganist tendencies but nevertheless insist that all Jews are "Israel" and remain within the overarching community we call "Judaism" even if their own practice is idolatrous and not Judaism at all. The Torah therefore makes a distinction between what individual Jews acknowledge as their own religion and the religion mandated in the covenant; individual Jews may be part of Torah Judaism despite disaffiliating with it. The Israel of normative Judaism is genuinely a people, not a cultic community alone. This has the consequence that every variety of normative Judaism must acknowledge its continuing connection with the whole Jewish people for good or ill, even if other paths and Jews may be characterized as in error. Purely sectarian definitions of Judaism are discouraged, and if groups based on such definitions should arise, it is part of their schismatic logic (and redefinition of the people Israel) that if the groups are viable at all, they would soon be lost to Judaism and will cease to be seen as forms of Judaism. Perhaps this is what happened with early Christianity. Jewish identity thus is not simply a matter of religious affirmation or of self-determination; it is also an objective socio-religious category, reflecting the existence of an ongoing people.

A further advantage of this definition of normative Judaism is to make clear what

Judaism is not, thus helping to resolve the egregious confusion over whether Christianity, for instance, is a form of Judaism. It also dissolves the fuzzy but common idea that merely ethnic affiliation or ethical behavior is all there really is to Judaism. A clear answer is given as well to the relativism especially seductive and commonplace among western Jews, which treats as Judaism anything anyone likes to affirm.

Finally, this definition highlights areas worthy of study when considering Jewish religious movements. Obviously, the ways the common elements of normative Judaism are articulated help distinguish various movements in the history of Judaism. But it is important to recognize also the common elements, so that we remain clear that we are dealing with an ongoing conversation about things transcending any particular time and place, the history of Judaism as it engages with universal concerns, and not the history of Judaisms, each limited to a particular period with its own situation, and its own group. That all movements share ideas about God, Torah, and peoplehood, and, as a result, generally celebrate the same festivals and even pray the same prayers is an essential datum. Each group sees itself within the fabric of the whole, as part of generations of Jews. Each sees itself as engaged on behalf of all Israel and even on behalf of humanity in general with universal and transcendental realities, which we tend to ignore when we relativize each group. A phenomenological understanding starts with the universals and the transcendental issues important to every religious Jew, in every age. Within that context, it is fascinating to see how different cultural-spiritual styles can arise and develop, producing qualitatively different ways of being Jewish. It is important to appreciate the enormous diversity possible in, as well as the clear normative limits of, the Judaic tradition. This speaks of the richness of that tradition. As in all great poetry, the most creative variety is spun out from the restraints of the normative structure, as that structure is brought into relationship with the realities of life.

EVAN ZUESSE

NOTES

[1] As Arthur Hertzberg has suggested, drawing on Jacob Talmon's research, the emphatically anti-Jewish themes in the "totalitarian democracy" advocated in the Enlightenment period were central enough to continue to be major obsessions in many modern forms of totalitarianism, both fascist and communist. See his *The French Enlightenment and the Jews: The Origins of Modern Anti-Semitism* (New York, 1970), pp. 363f. On Spinoza and his predecessor Hobbes, see Leo Strauss, *Spinoza's Critique of Religion*, trans. E.M. Sinclair (New York, 1965). For a good analysis of the anti-Semitism of the most "liberal" Enlightenment figures, such as Goethe, Dohm, and Herder, see Isaac Eisenstein-Barzilay, "The Jew in the Literature of the Enlightenment," in A.G. Duker and M. Ben-Horin, eds., *Emancipation and Counter-Emancipation: Selected Essays from Jewish Social Studies* (New York, 1974), pp. 90–115.

[2] A memorable instance of this outlook is Martin Noth, *The History of Israel* (New York, 1960). His influential theory of the non-Sinaitic, Canaanitic source of Israel's religion leads directly to his conclusion (or starting point?) that the end of the history of Israel was signaled when the Jewish people rejected Jesus (i.e., universalism) and rose in a purely "national" rebellion against Rome (see his final chapter). The diaspora before and Israel after 70 C.E. hardly exist in Noth's history.

[3] On the other hand, it is interesting to see how often western treatments of non-western religions have used the same triumphalist constructs first created to distort and Christianize the history of Judaism.

[4] David Jacobson, "When Palestine Meant Israel," in *Biblical Archaeology Review*, 27, no. 3 (May/June, 2001), pp. 42–47, 57, suggests that "Palestine" originally referred to *palaistês*, Greek for "wrestler," i.e., the equivalent of the Hebrew *Yisrael*, "God-wrestler." Josephus, Jacobson says, is the first author in antiquity to clearly link the name Palestine with the Philistines. Herodotus even asserts that the people of *Palaistinê* are circumcised—but the Philistines were uncircumcised.

[5] Julius Wellhausen bluntly insisted on this equivalence, as cited approvingly, by Robert Goldenberg, *The Nations That Know You Not* (Albany, 1998), p. 113, n. 20. As his title indicates, Golden-berg presents a negative view of his topic, to such a degree that he does not even discuss the two Biblical books that chiefly involve non-Jews, Job and Jonah, which assume a very different view of other cultures from that of his title.

[6] An excellent example of the alleged dichotomy between Israelite religion and Judaism is Johannes Pedersen's celebrated *Israel: Its Life and Culture* (London, 1926–1948): on the one side, we see the at least quasi-pagan and noble Arab-like Hebrews or Israelites, on the other—after the Babylonian Exile—the resentful, legalistic, particularistic Jews. At that point, Pedersen descends into anti-Semitic stereotype. This text is

worth singling out as a still warmly regarded and studied classic and because it pretends to present a purely phenomenological and even philological analysis of the cultural history of ancient Israel. See similarly John Bright, *A History of Israel* (Philadelphia, n.d. [1959]), pp. 323, 413ff., 431, etc.

[7] For criticism of these "revisionists" on behalf of the consensus, see the strongly worded William G. Dever, "Save Us From Postmodern Malarky," in *Biblical Archaeological Review*, 26, no. 2 (March/April, 2000), pp. 28–69.

[8] So, for example, James H. Charlesworth, an author of unquestionable good will towards Judaism, has argued in his contributions to James H. Charlesworth, ed., *Jews and Christians: Exploring the Past, Present and Future* (New York, 1990). This idea even has been taken up by some Jewish scholars, e.g., Hayyim Goren Perelmuter, *Siblings: Rabbinic Judaism and Early Christianity at Their Beginnings* (New York, 1989).

[9] Clifford Geertz, "Religion as a Cultural System," in Michael Banton, ed., *Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Religion* (London, 1966), pp. 1–46, esp. p. 4. That symbols are basic to religion is surely correct, but the tendency to dismiss the actual referents of the symbols, what they mean for those who use them, and instead to stress the effects of these meanings on the believers, is at the root of the distortion we are here commenting on. Anthropologists (and other reductionists) patronize in their claim that they know better than the subjects themselves what the subjects mean by their words.

[10] Clifford Geertz, *Islam Observed* (New Haven, 1968).

[11] Joachim Wach, *The Comparative Study of Religion*, Joseph M. Kitagawa, ed., (New York, 1958), pp. 48–49 and *passim*.

[12] See my "Calendar of Judaism," in *The Encyclopaedia of Judaism*, vol. 1, pp. 32–50.

[13] M. Ethan Katsh, *The Electronic Media and the Transformation of Law* (Oxford, 1989), p. 3.

[14] Note that Ezek. 8:14 takes for granted that "weeping for Tammuz," a part of the Babylonian cult of a dying-and-rising god, is antithetical to Judaism. Cf., Jonathan Z. Smith, who argues against the consensus of previous scholarship that there was no dying-and-rising god complex in antiquity ("Dying and Rising Gods," in Mircea Eliade, ed., *The Encyclopedia of Religion* (New York, 1986), vol. 4, pp. 521–527). The claim is not persuasive. The Eleusinian mysteries, the Dionysian mysteries, and those of Attis, Mithras, and Cybele all explicitly pivot in one modulation or another around life's springing from death and eternal life attained through a bloody divine sacrifice. These were the most prevalent cults throughout the Roman world. Smith does not discuss the mystery cults in his survey. Nevertheless, their common stress on dying-and-rising gods means that they had to share a common indebtedness to earlier religious cults. We find their roots in Egypt, Asia Minor, Syria, and Mesopotamia.

[15] There was, however, no such anathema against Christianity in the *birkat ha-minim*. See Reuven Kimelman, "*Birkat Ha-Minim* and the Lack of Evidence for an Anti-Christian Jewish Prayer in Late Antiquity," in A.L. Baumgarten, et al., eds., *Jewish and Christian Self-Definition, vol. 2: Aspects of Judaism in the Graeco-Roman Period* (London, 1981), pp. 226–244.

[16] For a good overview of early relations and the split between the two religions, with bibliography, see Menachem Mor, "The Persian, Hellenistic and Hasmonean Period," in Alan Crown, ed., *The Samaritans* (Tübingen, 1989), pp. 1–18.

[17] Jacob Neusner, "Socialism-Yiddishism, Judaism and," in *The Encyclopaedia of Judaism*, vol. 3, pp. 1332–1342; cf., esp. pp. 1332f. and 1340f.

[18] Ibid., p. 1340. The claim that the very category of "religion" is a late medieval European Christian invention was forcefully made in Wilfrid Cantwell Smith, *The Meaning and End of Religion* (New York, 1963). Even Smith himself sometimes tends to reduce actual religions to "faiths," but we can be sure that Judaism was much more than that. This does not mean however that it was less than that!

Piety in Judaism

Piety fills the life of every Jew and endows it with transcendent meaning. In all forms of Rabbinic Judaism, ancient and modern, piety overshadows faith as the central defining core of the religion. Thus the daily, weekly, and annual routines of the observant Jew as well as the rituals of the life cycle events—each with its own transcendent meanings ascribed within the system of faith—are the concrete signs of the individual's achievement of the standards of piety demanded by Judaism. From Talmudic times until the present, most of the elements of these Rabbinic forms of piety remain commonly prevalent in Orthodox and Hasidic articulations of the religion, less so in today's Conservative Judaism, and only selectively in Reform and Reconstructionist systems of the faith.

Beginnings and Scope

Early rabbis of the second century C.E. began to emphasize distinctive groups of practices that differentiated their form of Judaism.

Some scholars speculate that these rabbis chose to prescribe these practices as a means of maintaining spirituality after the loss of the Temple. These rabbis prescribed, for example, that each Jew recite one hundred blessings each day. The recitation of a blessing prior to the performance of many basic rituals imprints on those rituals a mark of mystical meaning. T. Ber. 6:24–25 spells this out:

> R. Meir used to say, "There is no man in Israel who does not perform one hundred commandments each day [and recite over them one hundred blessings]. . . . And there is no man in Israel who is not surrounded by [reminders of the] commandments: [Every person wears] phylacteries on his head, phylacteries on his arm, has a *mezuzah* on his door post and four fringes on his garment around him. . . ." In the home

The piety Rabbinic Jews practice relates heavily to rituals of the home, village, and fellowship, especially those associated with prayer. Rabbinic Judaism expects all Jews to practice rituals from morning until night. From the first stirring every morning, the Jew begins the day with acts of religious significance.

Hence, washing hands upon arising takes on a special meaning. The individual conducts the washing according to a simple but prescribed practice. Water is poured on the fingers of each hand up to the joint as specified by the masters. The inclusive Rabbinic vision of piety starts here and extends broadly to the individual throughout the activities of the day. Accordingly religious observances are associated with even some bodily functions, such as elimination, not ordinarily considered in the realm of religious ritual. The rabbis said that one has to recite a blessing after the act as thanks for continued health. This imbues even that normally profane physical process with some aspect of piety.

Prayers

In Rabbinic Judaism morning prayers are literally clothed in piety. The man puts on the *tallit* (prayer shawl) and *tefillin* (phylacteries) while reciting the blessings for each (figs. 59 and 120). Every pious male obtains and maintains these prized and essential objects of piety in accord with the prescriptions of the rabbis and scribes. He wears these objects to show compliance with the prescriptions of the verses of the Torah recited in the *shema* (Deut. 6:4–9, 11:13–21 and especially Num. 15:37–41). Each knot on the four fringes of the prayer shawl is tied in accordance with age-old tradition. The phylacteries are crafted of select leather, made into cubical containers to hold the small parchments of biblical paragraphs written by trained scribes. The head-tefillin has to rest on the worshipper's forehead between the eyes, neither too high on the head, nor too low on the face. The leather strap that holds it in place is tied in accordance with known custom. The wearer understands that the knot of leather that sits at the base of his skull is a representation of the letter *yod*, the third letter of *Shaddai*, one of the divine names. On the leather box of the arm-tefillin is inscribed the letter *shin*. The wearer knows that the knot that holds it fast on his left biceps—opposite his heart—is a form of the letter *dalet*. Thus as he recites the prescribed prayers, the Jew is bound head and heart to God, *Shaddai*. He wears these appurtenances each weekday from the time he reaches thirteen, the age of maturity, now commonly called the age of Bar Mitzvah. Obtaining a pair of phylacteries from the scribe is the most significant, overt sign of achieving adult membership in the Rabbinic community. The standard practice is to wear the prayer shawl and phylacteries during the morning prayers and then to remove them. Historically, to show extreme piety, some few virtuoso rabbis wore them all day as they sat immersed in the study of Torah.

An ordinary Jewish man may recite his prayers in a synagogue or study hall or in private, at home or in any orderly place. For optimal piety he goes to the synagogue to pray with the *minyan*, the prayer quorum of ten adult Jewish males. The formalization of the synagogue as a standard communal institution took place over a span from the first century through the middle ages. Rather than on the synagogue *per se*, the emphasis in Jewish custom and law has always been simply on prayer in a public gathering of ten or more men, not on prayer in any specified building (e.g., a synagogue) or in

a specifically designated place for gathering (e.g., a sanctuary). Prayer as an aspect of Rabbinic piety thus is considered mainly in terms of a societal association with a community of other Jews. But pious Jews have traditionally placed little emphasis on the need for sacred bricks and mortar to fulfill the spiritual needs of prayer.

Rabbinic piety centers on stability and repetition. On weekdays Jews gather for the morning, afternoon, and evening prayers. Major elements of prayer are repeated with small variations at the three services. A person says the *shema* in the morning and evening services; the *amidah* (standing prayer of eighteen blessings) in the morning afternoon and evening services; the *alenu* (a sublime prayer proclaiming God as king) concludes all three. On Monday and Thursday (and on any festival or fast day) they add to these prayers a morning Torah service, in which they read the first section of the weekly Torah portion that is going to be read in its entirety during the Sabbath morning service at the end of the work week. This focuses attention on the coming Sabbath celebration and gives the men gathered during the week an added opportunity to hear the inspiration of the words of Torah.

A fourth service, the additional prayers, called *musaf*, is added to celebrate special days, including Sabbaths and holy days. On New moons, celebrants add several paragraphs to the regular services and read an appropriate passage from the Torah. They conclude the morning prayers with the recitation of the *amidah*—the standing prayer of eighteen blessings—of the additional service. Likewise on holidays, modifications are made in the regular prayers and the additional *musaf amidah* is appended.

Evening prayers, optimally recited in the usual quorum, consist of the *shema, amidah*, and *alenu*. A widespread custom is to recite the *shema* once more at bedtime. Many believe this will protect the individual from harm during the night.

Women's Piety

Women have not been assigned an egalitarian role in traditional Rabbinic piety. In accordance with the profile of Prov. 31:10–31, they are assigned instead a life of valor. Piety for the woman in traditional Judaism thus emphasizes more her personal character as wife, mother, and homemaker, and less her participation in public rituals of prayer and the synagogue. In many Jewish cultures through the course of history, women were not required or expected to attend the synagogue at all. One Rabbinic expression used to justify these choices was that, "The honor of the princess is in the interior (i.e., in the home, not the synagogue)."

For the Jewish woman, developing good character is elevated to a process of piety. Shyness, kindness, and good-heartedness are singled out as desired traits. Modesty is a paramount virtue for the pious woman. The rabbis have translated this expectation into formal custom. The pious woman dresses in accordance with the prevalent rules of modesty. These rules are more rigorous for a married woman. On many occasions and in many places they require that she cover her hair with a hat, kerchief, or wig, cover her arms and legs with suitable clothing, and that she act in a humble and reticent manner. Ideally, to conform to the needs of piety, a woman's speech and conversation at all times are to be modest. The rabbis prohibit a married woman from any form of flirtation or any action that might be misconstrued as an invitation to licentiousness.

Historically, several meaningful prayers were reserved as acts of piety predominantly for women. Saying special chapters from the book of Psalms (*tehillim*), especially on behalf of the sick, was an act of piety more prevalent among women. Characteristically, lighting candles right before the onset of the Sabbath on Friday evening is a woman's act of piety on behalf of her entire household.

Rabbis gave serious attention to obligations and exemptions for women in all acts of piety and religious commandments (*mitzvot*). The rabbis distilled their concept down to the principle that women are exempt from all pious acts that must be accomplished at a fixed time of day. Women thus are not expected to attend the synagogue and, in part because they were not obligated to recite the prayers in the first

place, are not counted in the official quorum. The common expectation is that women will not join with men in the professional study of Torah. With rare exceptions, until the emergence of modern, non-Orthodox forms of Judaism, they could not study alongside men in the yeshiva and could not be ordained as rabbis.

The Pious Home

The woman's main role in traditional Jewish culture is to aid her husband in building a household among the people Israel. It is deemed a significant act of piety to marry, raise children, and to maintain a pious family life. Thus the goal of the union of a man and woman is to create a Jewish home. Simple rites of piety mark the life cycle rituals of passage in Rabbinic tradition. The wedding ceremony creates the pious state of matrimony in a few symbolic stages. At the betrothal, the woman is designated for marriage to her intended husband. In medieval and later times, the betrothal and wedding were combined into one event. Bride and groom often fast and repent from wrongdoing on their wedding day, which some rabbis compare to Yom Kippur.

The writing of the Ketubah—the marriage contract—formalizes the matrimony. This Aramaic legal document is given to the wife to protect her interests within the marriage. The writ is often read aloud by a rabbi during the wedding ceremony. During this brief ceremony, the groom places a ring on the bride's finger and recites, "Behold you are sanctified to me in accord with the laws of Moses and Israel." The presiding rabbi or distinguished members of the family or community then recites seven blessings that allude to the cosmic and mythic biblical accounts of the beginning and end of time, which sanctify the present moment of piety. The concluding blessing in a series of seven declares:

> Blessed art Thou Lord our God King of the Universe who created joy and happiness, bride and groom, gladness, jubilation, cheer and delight, love, friendship, harmony and fellowship. Lord our God soon may there be heard in the cities of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem the sounds of joy and happiness, bride and groom, exultation of grooms from their wedding canopy and of children from their joyous banquets. Blessed are you Lord our God who gladdens the groom with the bride.

Traditionally the wedding was held out-of-doors under a canopy, the *chuppah*, and even today, in the case of weddings held indoors, the use of the canopy continues. Thus the wedding is imbued with the cosmic symbolism of the heavens, on the one side, and a metaphor for the new home, represented by the *chuppah*, on the other. According to tradition, the divine presence comes down upon the canopy and angels of heaven cry out that it be God's will that the bride and groom rejoice with one another. After the ceremony it is a common custom to break a glass, symbolizing both the fragility of the relationship and the sufferings of the Jewish people. The bride and groom then go briefly into a private room, to embody their intimacy. After the wedding feast, the couple continues to celebrate the marriage for one week with special blessings and customs at every festive dinner.

Pious Relationships

A peaceful home and harmonious family life are a simple ideal for Rabbinic society, and these goals are elevated to acts of piety. A husband has to make efforts to understand and cater to the needs of his wife, to control his anger and his ego. The wife in turn must strive continually to fulfill her roles within the family. Biblical models of loyalty, like that of Ruth, and bravery, like that of Esther, guide the actions of the pious woman. The rabbis said that sanctity resided in the correct union of partners.

Childbearing and rearing are imbued with elements of piety, making it incumbent upon both partners to provide a nurturing environment for their children. The obligation to educate one's children is also elevated to the level of an act of piety. The Talmud prescribes that a father must teach his son Torah, a trade, and how to swim, that is survival skills, and self-defense.

More so than other religions, Rabbinic

Judaism asserts that religious piety governs sexuality and intimacy between partners in a marriage, an area of piety called "family purity." Couples are urged to observe the rules both out of promises of merit and threats of dire consequences both to those who violated them and to their offspring. Based on Lev. 18:19, the rabbis formalized a taboo against sexual relations during a woman's monthly menstrual cycle. A piety thereby governs the most intimate physical relations between husband and wife.

Intricate rituals govern the period of abstinence. During the wife's menstrual period, the husband and wife do not touch each other casually, or at meals, or share the same bed. The separation is compared to a hedge of roses erected between lovers, and mastery of one's desires is considered a sure sign of piety. The rabbis taught that the laws of family purity will continually renew the love between husband and wife. After the prescribed period of abstinence during menstruation and the following seven clean days, the wife immerses in the specially constructed *miqvah*-bath (fig. 121), under the supervision of another woman, before she resumes intimacy with her husband. Traditionally, if there are uncertainties about the menstrual period, a rabbi was consulted to judge whether the emission required abstinence. This was done through the anonymous submission of test cloths to the authority. Maimonides in the Middle Ages urged Jews to observe these laws, not based on fact or logic but out of "the devotion of one's heart."

The rights and expectations of husband and wife are formulated into Rabbinic prescriptions for the pious to observe. Elements of a relationship, like love, devotion, and faithfulness, are not merely character traits to be admired. They are integral to fulfillment of a pious life within the parameters of a marital relationship.

The Pious Household

Piety extends to nearly all aspects of life in the Rabbinic home. The symbolic *mezuzah*—a sort of amulet—hangs on every doorway, sanctifying the space of the house and protecting its inhabitants. It contains passages from Deut. 6:4–9 and 11:13–21, written on parchment in 22 lines as in the phylacteries. The rabbis noted that the *mezuzah*, *tefillin*, and fringes of the prayer shawl remind a person of the need to be pious and protect one from sin. A person has thirty days from the time of occupancy to affix a *mezuzah* to his home.

Especially noteworthy is the extensive reach of practices of piety into the cuisine of the Rabbinic home, which is governed by the laws of kashrut (fig. 121). Kosher food categories and rules require constant attention to the sources and preparation of food in the household. Meats may only be obtained from a trusted butcher who knows that the item from a kosher species, a healthy animal, and that it was properly slaughtered and prepared. A Jew may not consume *treifa*, unfit meat or foods not prepared under the stringencies of the dietary restrictions (fig. 123).

The taboo against cooking or eating milk and meat together necessitates that homes have two sets of utensils and dishes, one for the preparation of meat meals, the other for dairy. The theory behind this is that a pot, utensil, or other dish absorbs the flavor when milk or meat is cooked in, or even just placed on, it and imparts that flavor to whatever food subsequently is in contact with it. Thus a dish used for milk may not thereafter be used for meat or *vice versa*. The details of maintaining separate utensils for dairy and meat are complex and require extensive Rabbinic guidance.

Kosher preparation of foods requires that, to remove the blood, which may not be consumed, meat is soaked in water, carefully salted with coarse salt, and washed. Further, specific veins must be removed. Liver in particular must be cut, washed, salted, and broiled over a fire. Eggs with a spot of blood in them are deemed forbidden. Vegetables must be carefully inspected for insects and worms that would render them unfit for consumption. Alongside the requirement that milk and meat foods neither be prepared together nor eaten at the same meal, Rabbinic law required the immersion in a *mikvah* of new metal or glass cooking utensils prior to initial use.

In an effort to perpetuate some of the rules of the destroyed Jerusalem Temple and its priestly cult, the rabbis symbolically extended the laws of dough offerings, tithes, and heave-offerings. When baking bread it is necessary to separate *challah*, a small piece of dough that in ancient times would have been designated as the priest's share but which today is burned rather than consumed. This serves as a memorial of the priestly dues that may no longer be brought to the Temple and as a sign of hope for the redemption of Israel and the restoration of the Temple service. Any bread dough made of wheat, barley, spelt, rye, or oat flour is liable to this obligation.

In addition, the rabbis recommend as an act of piety that a Jew donate a tithe of his income to charity as a memorial of the Levitical tithes described in Scripture.[1] Much has been written and preached about the piety of giving generously to charity. Maimonides extolled the virtues of anonymous donation as the most pious form of charity.

Every occasion for eating is transformed by Rabbinic precept into a pious meal. Before partaking of bread, pious Jews wash their hands and recite a blessing, a symbol of the purity once associated with the priests' entering the Temple to perform the sacred rites of the cult. Indeed, in accordance with the system developed in the Mishnah and Talmud, pious Jews recite blessings and prayers before and after eating or drinking any food.

The rabbis determined that what makes the consumption of food a meal is the breaking of bread. This brings with it the blessing, "Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, who brings forth bread from the earth," a blessing that is held to encompass thanks for all foods eaten during that meal. In the case of a meal beginning with bread, accordingly, no blessings beyond the one for bread are recited for the individual foods that are consumed. But after such a meal, at which bread has been consumed, the full grace after meals must be recited.

Snacks or other occasions for eating that do not involve bread are subject to different rules. These acts of consumption are not treated as unitary meals, and for their case, accordingly, Rabbinic authorities developed a system of blessings appropriate to each individual type of food or drink. When consumed outside of the context of a meal including bread, that is, individual blessings are specified for vegetables, fruits, baked goods, wine, and drinks. Piety additionally requires that one recite short blessings of thanksgiving after the eating baked goods or individual foods.

Group meals create a formal fellowship. At the completion of a meal at which a minimum of three men ate bread together, one diner is designated to recite an invitation to the others to recite the grace together. Good table manners thus become a matter of piety as well.

A righteous Jew is to uphold the imperative of hospitality. One who engages in the kindness of welcoming guests is understood to emulate the character of Abraham the patriarch, who welcomed the three messengers of God (Gen. 18:1–8). Opening one's house to the poor is the highest form of the piety of welcoming the stranger. Proper behavior towards animals also is expected as a matter of piety. Causing any suffering to an animal is a transgression. Indeed one is not permitted to eat before first feeding his animals.

Part of the Rabbinic way of life is devotion to children. This starts with the fundamental commandment that a father circumcise his son on the eighth day. This practice goes back to Abraham as the most ancient sign of the covenant between God and his chosen people. If the father cannot fulfill this role, he designates a professional circumcizer, *mohel*, to carry out the rite. Most often the ceremony is occasion for a public celebration and an obligatory feast. Traditionally all members of the community were expected to participate in the celebration. Members of the family and distinguished guests received the honors of carrying and holding the infant before, during, and after the procedure. All the assembled guests would bless the child that he might enter into a life of Torah, marriage, and good deeds. The child's name was then announced in public for the first time.

Historically, there was no formal ritual to mark the birth of a daughter. However it has become a common practice to name

one's daughter in the synagogue after being called to the Torah on the Sabbath following the birth.

Alongside circumcision, another symbolic act harking back to biblical times is the practice of redeeming one's first born son from a priest. This is based on Num. 3:11–13 and 44–48, where God declares that all the first born of the people of Israel are his, but that he has taken into his service in their stead the Levitical priests. Rather than turn their first born sons over for service in the priestly cult, Israelites may accordingly pay redemption money. This practice is carried out to our own day, when, thirty-one days after the birth of a first born son, the father symbolically presents to a Jew of priestly lineage (*Cohen*) five shekel coins, or their equivalent value, for his son.

The caring roles of mother and father are demarcated clearly within the pious family structure. Caring for infants traditionally is thought to be the role of the mother. Discipline of children is evenly shared between mother and father. Education of the young up to a certain age is entrusted to the mother. An example of a Jewish lullaby captures the spirit of pious child rearing:

> Run my son, run hard
> Enter the house of your teacher.
> Search and seek only in the Torah
> For her wealth is better than all wares.

When old enough, boys are educated by the father or sent off to formal training with a rabbi or suitable teacher. Historically, girls were afforded a less intensive education.

The bar mitzvah, or coming of age ceremony, was a late development in Judaic ritual and piety. As noted above, it marks the first occasion for boys to put on *tefillin* and to be called in public to read from the Torah. The bat mitzvah ceremony for girls is an even later practice, developing within the past hundred years. Some communities mark a girl's coming of age with a celebration in the synagogue or, in orthodox circles, more commonly by a public feast.

Finally, filial piety, or honor of one's parents, is a hallmark of all Jewish piety. Some rabbis expressed this in mystical terms. Rav Joseph, hearing his mother's footsteps approaching, would say, "I rise before the Shekhinah (Divine Presence) that draws nigh."

Philosophical Meanings of Piety

Within Judaism, the obligations of what modern Western people would call a life of piety are clear. Yet it bears noting that, within this context of Judaism, the definition of the term "piety" itself is fraught with difficulties. For piety is a classical category of Western discourse related to religious action and ethics (cf., Plato, *Euthyphro*). But it is not a category native to classical Judaism at all.

We have proposed that for Rabbinic Judaism piety implies living in accordance with a faith in the validity and relevance of the Torah as taught and expanded by the rabbis. This means that in all aspects of day-to-day life one acts in a manner and maintains vivid moods and motivations that are in keeping with the teachings of the law, written and oral. Piety endows everyday activities, decisions, and attitudes with special significances associated with historical, mystical, and redemptive beliefs. Piety requires that new practices that might emerge from age to age be based on these same ideals.

The motives and goals of piety within the Judaic system lead to several outcomes: Piety leads to a life of sanctification—*qedushah*—in accordance with the Halakhah. It leads to a life of awe, of both love and fear of God. It results in submission to a higher power, engendering a sense of creatureliness. It enables the believer to insure entry into paradise, that is, the "World to Come" (i.e., the afterlife or heaven). The collective piety of the community of the people Israel is understood to aid in bringing about the messianic era. On the most basic level, many believe that acts of piety also result in material gain for their practitioners.

Yet most aspects of Jewish piety are performed not as the free choice of an individual who desires a special reward but because these behaviors are viewed as God's commandments and, hence, as obligations. A majority of the practices that comprise Jewish piety, that is, have official status, are

binding on the entire community of the faithful, as *mitzvot*, divine duties. God's command both compels the Jew to live a pious life and endows daily activities with transcendent meanings. Even the Judaic notion of custom, *minhag*, gives quasi-official status to pious practices that emerge over time and are not directly associated with God and the original revelation at Sinai. The obligation to carry out such customs might technically be limited in time and place, and these practices might, by the letter of the law, be less authoritative than other pious acts. But often such distinctions are unrecognized in the life of a pious Jew, who sees all traditional Jewish behaviors as essentially obligatory.

Categories of Piety

The ultimate yardstick of piety is the *Zaddiq*, the righteous saint who we would call purely ethical, who flourishes as a proper human, and who achieves true virtue. The extent to which one adheres to all of the norms of piety marks how closely one proximates this standard of perfect righteousness.

Cognitive piety is a subset of the general category. Its highest form is the perpetual study of the Torah, the source and authoritative basis of all Judaic piety. The well-known epigram that expressed this notion asserts that, "The study of Torah is as important as all other acts of piety combined."

Another dimension of piety may be referred to as "mind-piety," i.e., the desirability of maintaining perpetually pure thoughts, of harboring thoughts of Torah at all times. Along these lines, the rabbis emphasized the centrality in the daily life of the Jew of meditation, prayer, and contemplation.

Body-piety is another aspect of the larger concern. Physical actions endowed with piety include bowing and other specific bodily postures in prayer; washing for the purposes of ritual purity rather than simple hygiene; wearing proper clothing and appurtenances of pious living: *tzitzit* (fringes), *tefillin*, *yarmulke*, hat; other forms of dress; haircut, beard, or side locks. Naturally all aspects of sexuality can be included in this subset, as discussed above.

Synagogue piety is a third major area of the subject. Many acts associated with prayer in the synagogue define elements of this type of piety. Blowing and hearing the shofar on the New Year and shaking the *lulav* on the festival of Tabernacles constitute two examples of this area. All acts of prayer come under this rubric.

Some modern, secular, attitudes deny the value of the wide range of religious practices that define piety. Some even argue that constant piety and familiarity with the sacred in fact devalue the worshipper's relationship to the deity and render it rote and mechanical. Apologists for piety respond that such attitudes denigrate one important means of fulfilling a basic human need: acts of piety connect individuals to the past and future, to heaven and earth, to family and community. In this view, the modern, secular person, bereft of modes of enacting piety, lives a more lonely, detached life with less passion and devotion. Proponents of piety thus ask if the rise in secularization has in fact been accompanied by an increase in levels of individual or communal happiness or by a decline in economic oppression or psychological dysfunction?

The believer-practitioner of the pious life emphasizes a main advantage afforded by the intimacy of piety. In the Judaic notion, God wants constant contact with the believer, akin to an obsessive love affair, renewed frequently through expected daily affirmations. Constant devotion to the divine provides the perpetual training and conditioning for that relationship. Piety invigorates all the devotions of life, marriage, raising children, advancing one's vocation, and contributes to the well-being and wholeness of one's community (see also figs. 124–126).

Tzvee Zahavy

Note

[1] See also Charity in Judaism.

Pirqé Abot

TRACTATE Abot, conventionally dated at ca. 250 C.E.,[1] forms a melancholy meditation on the human condition of the individual Israelite. Corporate Israel and its historical fate never frame the issue. The problem facing the framer of the document—provoked by the logic of monotheism—is succinctly stated: "We do not have in hand an explanation either for the prosperity of the wicked or for the suffering of the righteous" (4:15). The resolution of the paradox of palpable injustice—the prosperity of the wicked more than the suffering of the righteous—is in the doctrine of life beyond the grave. Individual existence does not end in death. There is a world to come, which affords eternal life to the righteous but which excludes those who are wicked in this world.

In tractate Abot that eternal life is afforded in a juridical procedure, a trial, to individuals in response to their conduct in this life. "This world is like an antechamber before the world to come. Get ready in the antechamber, so you can go into the great hall." How to prepare? "Better is a single moment spent in penitence and good deeds in this world than the whole of the world to come. And better is a single moment of inner peace in the world to come than the whole of a lifetime spent in this world" (4:16–17). The world to come then forms the reward for those that live humbly and righteously.

Above all, Heaven knows what mortals do and keeps a record for each one, with consequences that follow from right conduct, and punishment for wrong. Thus "Be meticulous in a small religious duty as in a large one, for you do not know what sort of reward is coming for any of the various religious duties. And reckon with the loss required in carrying out a religious duty against the reward for doing it, and the reward for committing a transgression against the loss for doing it. And keep your eye on three things, so you will not come into the clutches of transgression: Know what is above you: An eye which sees, and an ear which hears, and all your actions are written down in a book" (2:1). "And know before whom you work, for your employer can be depended upon to pay your wages for what you can do" (2:14). God is an active presence everywhere, and prayer is addressed to a listening ear: "when you pray, don't treat your praying as a matter of routine. But let it be a plea for mercy and supplication before the Omnipresent, blessed be he" (2:13). The Israelite lives in an enchanted world, where everything he says and does counts.

Accordingly, a coherent, compelling picture of the human situation emerges. "Those who are born are destined to die, and those who die are destined for resurrection. And the living are destined to be judged—so as to know, to make known, and to confirm that he is God, he is the one who forms, he is the one who creates, he is the one who understands, he is the one who judges, he is the one who gives evidence, he is the one who brings suit, and he is the one who is going to make the ultimate judgment. Blessed be he, for before him are not guile, forgetfulness, respect for persons, bribe taking, for everything is his. And know that everything is subject to reckoning. And do not let your evil impulse persuade you that Sheol is a place of refuge for you. For despite your wishes were you formed, despite your wishes were you born, despite your wishes do you live, despite your wishes do you die, and despite your wishes are you going to give a full accounting before the King of kings of kings, the Holy One, blessed be he" (4:22). The key to the document's message thus is that there is justice and there is a judge, and all who live are subject to retribution for their deeds: "He saw a skull floating on the water and said to it, 'Because you drowned others, they drowned you, and in the end those who drowned you will be drowned.'"

Where is the justice in all this? A simple doctrine accounts for the responsibility of each individual for every action. Man is

accountable for what he does because he has free choice: "Everything is foreseen, and free choice is given. In goodness the world is judged. And all is in accord with the abundance of deeds. All is handed over as a pledge, And a net is cast over all the living. The store is open, the storekeeper gives credit, the account book is open, and the hand is writing. Whoever wants to borrow may come and borrow. The charity collectors go around every day and collect from man whether he knows it or not. And they have grounds for what they do. And the judgment is a true judgment. And everything is ready for the meal (3:15–16)." I cannot imagine a more articulate statement of the system viewed whole than that statement of reward and punishment, foreknowledge and free will.

What guarantees the equity of God's governance therefore is that death is succeeded by life for those that merit it. "Don't give up hope of retribution" (1:7). "And do not have confidence in yourself until the day you die . . . And do not say, 'When I have time, I shall study,' for you may never have time" (2:4). "It's not your job to finish the work, but you're not free to walk away from it. If you have learned much Torah, they will give you a good reward. And your employer can be depended upon to pay your wages for what you do. And know what sort of reward is going to be given to the righteous in the coming time" (2:16). Reward and punishment are tempered by God's mercy and patience with human shortcomings: everything is in the effort.

The human situation portrayed by tractate Abot therefore entails alert and conscious conduct and imposes humility and fear. Man is a nullity, yet is an actor responsible for his own fate, has no reason to take pride in his condition, yet is subject to God's acute concern: "Reflect upon three things and you will not fall into the clutches of transgression: Know from whence you come, whither you are going, and before whom you are going to have to give a full account of yourself. From whence do you come? From a putrid drop. Whither are you going? To a place of dust, worms, and maggots And before whom are you going to give a full account of yourself? Before the King of kings of kings, the Holy One, blessed be he" (3:1).

So much for the reward for good conduct and the punishment for bad. The system portrayed in tractate Abot defines principles of virtue that register as good conduct. Of what does virtue consist? Since the human condition depends on God's will, virtue consists in making one's own wishes conform to those of God: "Make his wishes into your own wishes, so that he will make your wishes into his wishes. Put aside your wishes on account of his wishes, so that he will put aside the wishes of other people in favor of your wishes" (2:4). Those wishes are known, for God, in the Torah. Hence the supreme act of virtue consists in study of the Torah. Knowledge of God and the human condition derive from the act of grace comprised by the Torah, which informs man of what he otherwise could not have surmised, which is that he is created in the image of God; and which informs Israel that they are the children of God: "Precious is Adam, who was created in the image of God. It was an act of still greater love that it was made known to him that he was created in the image of God, as it is said, For in the image of God he made man (Gen. 9:6). Precious are Israelites, who are called children to the Omnipresent. It was an act of still greater love that they were called children to the Omnipresent, as it is said, You are the children of the Lord your God (Dt. 14:1). Precious are Israelites, to whom was given the precious thing. It was an act of still greater love that it was made known to them that to them was given that precious thing with which the world was made, as it is said, For I give you a good doctrine. Do not forsake my Torah (Prov. 4:2)" (3:14).

Torah-study forms the definition of the human vocation. Man was created to study the Torah: "If you have learned much Torah, do not puff yourself up on that account, for it was for that purpose that you were created" (2:8). That claim is hardly excessive, since through Torah-study man

meets God: "If two sit together and between them do not pass teachings of Torah, lo, this is a seat of the scornful, as it is said, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful (Ps. 1:1). But two who are sitting, and words of Torah do pass between them—the Presence is with them, as it is said, Then they that feared the Lord spoke with one another, and the Lord hearkened and heard, and a book of remembrance was written before him, for them that feared the Lord and gave thought to His name (Mal. 3:16). I know that this applies to two. How do I know that even if a single person sits and works on Torah, the Holy One, blessed be he, sets aside a reward for him? As it is said, 'Let him sit alone and keep silent, because he had laid it upon him' (Lam. 3:28)." Torah-study is analogous to prayer, with this difference: when the Israelite prays, he talks to God, but when he studies, God talks to him.

Accordingly, God is present where the Torah is studied, and the way to know God is to study the Torah. "Three who ate at a single table and did not talk about teachings of Torah while at that table are as though they ate from dead sacrifices (Ps, 106:28), as it is said, For all tables are full of vomit and filthiness if they are without God (Ps. 106:28). But three who ate at a single table and did talk about teachings of Torah while at that table are as if they ate at the table of the Omnipresent, blessed is he, as it is said, 'And he said to me, This is the table that is before the Lord' (Ez. 41:22)" (3:2-3). So too the matter is elaborated: "Among ten who sit and work hard on Torah the Presence comes to rest, as it is said, 'God stands in the congregation of God' (Ps. 82:1). And how do we know that the same is so even of five? For it is said, 'And he has founded his group upon the earth' (Am. 9:6). And how do we know that this is so even of three? Since it is said, 'And he judges among the judges' (Ps. 82:1). And how do we know that this is so even of two? Because it is said, 'Then they that feared the Lord spoke with one another, and the Lord hearkened and heard' (Mal. 3:16). And how do we know that this is so even of one? Since it is said, 'In every place where I record my name I will come to you and I will bless you' (Ex. 20:24)" (3:6).

But study of Torah bears with it two further obligations. The first is to make a living. One cannot rely on Torah-learning to provide for material wealth. Second, one must carry out the teachings that one studies. "Fitting is learning in Torah along with a craft, for the labor put into the two of them makes one forget sin. And all learning of Torah which is not joined with labor is destined to be null and cause sin. And all who work with the community—let them work with them for the sake of Heaven. For the merit of their fathers strengthens them, and their fathers' righteousness stands forever. And as for you, I credit you with a great reward, as if you had done all of the work required by the community on your own merit alone" (2:2). But Torah-study should be ceaseless and not interrupted by extraneous thoughts: "He who is going along the way and repeating his Torah tradition but interrupts his repetition and says, 'How beautiful is that tree! How beautiful is that ploughed field!'—Scripture reckons it to him as if he has become liable for his life" (3:7). This implacable judgment shocks and has sustained the softening of interpretation: if one deems the beauty of the tree or field to interrupt the continuity of Torah-learning, so failing to perceive the lessons of the Torah contained within nature, then the penalty accrues. But read on its own, its message is clear: the stakes in Torah-learning are cosmic.

The temptation to concentrate on Torah-study to the exclusion of virtuous deeds provokes concern. Practice of the Torah's teachings, not merely mastery of their content, counts. What of the tension between knowing and doing, the outcome of Torah-study? The result of Torah-study is proper conduct, and without proper conduct Torah-study is null: "If there is no learning of Torah, there is no proper conduct. If there is no proper conduct, there is no learning in Torah. If there is no wisdom, there is no reverence. If there is no reverence, there is no wisdom If there is no understanding, there is no knowledge. If there is no knowl-

edge, there is no understanding. If there is no sustenance, there is no Torah learning. If there is no Torah learning, there is no sustenance" (3:17). "He who learns so as to teach—they give him a chance to learn and to teach. He who learns so as to carry out his teachings—they give him a chance to learn, to teach, to keep, and to do" (4:5). Torah study yields this-worldly rewards: "Whoever keeps the Torah when poor will in the end keep it in wealth. And whoever treats the Torah as nothing when he is wealthy in the end will treat it as nothing in poverty. Keep your business to a minimum and make your business Torah. And be humble before everybody. And if you treat the Torah as nothing, you will have many treating you as nothing. And if you have labored in Torah, God has a great reward to give you" (4:9–10). But study of the Torah is its own reward and should not be construed as a source of benefit in this-worldly terms: "Do not make Torah teachings a crown with which to glorify yourself or a spade with which to dig. Whoever derives worldly benefit from teachings of Torah takes his life out of this world" (4:5).

To whom does the document speak? The "you" of the document is all Israel. But among Israelites, the document speaks most explicitly to masters and disciples, masters called upon to make decisions in courts as judges, disciples preparing through imitation of the masters for the same public responsibility. Abot is a handbook for judges, lawyers, and disciples. The lessons of Torah-study focus on the conduct of masters called upon to judge cases and dispense justice "Be prudent in judgment. Raise up many disciples. Make a fence for the Torah" (1:2). "Don't make yourself like one of those who make advocacy before judges while you yourself are judging a case. And when the litigants stand before you, regard them as guilty. And when they leave you, regard them as acquitted, when they have accepted your judgment." (1:8). "Examine the witnesses with great care. And watch what you say, lest they learn from what you say how to lie" (1:9). "Do not serve as a judge by yourself, for there is only One who serves as a judge all alone. And do not say, 'Accept my opinion.' For they have the choice in that matter, not you." (4:8). "He who avoids serving as a judge breaks off the power of enmity, robbery, and false swearing. And he who is arrogant about making decisions is a fool, evil, and prideful" (4:7).

Israel seen whole, not merely the sector of judges, lawyers, and disciples, comes under consideration only generically. So far as the document sets forth a social philosophy, it covers the Temple, the Torah, and private acts of loving kindness (1:2). "On three things does the world stand: on justice, on truth, and on peace." "Love work. Hate authority. Don't get friendly with the government" (1:10). Virtue depends upon forming the right motivation for right action and invokes once more the issues of reward and punishment. "Do not be like servants who serve the master on condition of receiving a reward, but be like servants who serve the master not on condition of receiving a reward. And let the fear of Heaven be upon you" (1:3).

What doctrine of emotions emerges, defining the everyday outcome of virtue? The ideal Israelite accommodates, concedes, conciliates, gives way, forbears. Virtue requires perpetual patience, penitence and concern for the feelings and responses of others: "Let the respect owing to your fellow be as precious to you as the respect owing to you yourself. And don't be easy to anger. And repent one day before you die" (2:10). "The honor owing to your disciple should be as precious to you as yours. And the honor owing to your fellow should be like the reverence owing to your master. And the reverence owing to your master should be like the awe owing to Heaven" (4:12). One must not only forbear but actively conciliate his fellows: "Anyone from whom people take pleasure—the Omnipresent takes pleasure. And anyone from whom people do not take pleasure, the Omnipresent does not take pleasure" (3:10).

The right attitude then requires trembling and humility before God and man alike. Fear of sin is the key to virtuous conduct, even more than mastery of Torah-

learning or wisdom: "For anyone whose fear of sin takes precedence over his wisdom, his wisdom will endure, And for anyone whose wisdom takes precedence over his fear of sin, his wisdom will not endure." Anyone whose deeds are more than his wisdom—his wisdom will endure. And anyone whose wisdom is more than his deeds—his wisdom will not endure" (3:9). Wisdom requires astuteness: "Who is a sage? He who learns from everybody. Who is strong? He who overcomes his desire. Who is rich? He who is happy in what he has. Who is honored? He who honors everybody" (4:1). "Do not despise anybody and do not treat anything as unlikely. For you have no one who does not have his time, and you have nothing which does not have its place" (4:3). So too, one must nurture the virtues of consideration and restraint: "Do not try to make amends with your fellow when he is angry, or comfort him when the corpse of his beloved is lying before him, or seek to find absolution for him at the moment at which he takes a vow, or attempt to see him when he is humiliated" (4:18).

Accordingly, a coherent message emerges from tractate Abot. It is in three parts. First, God is just and merciful, and those traits come to realization when every individual answers to him for conduct in this life, with reward or punishment awaiting in the world to come. Virtue, second, consists in obedience to God's wishes, the upright person making his wishes conform to those of God. The requirements of virtue, third, are known in the Torah, the ultimate act of divine grace, which the Israelite is charged with mastering and carrying out.

The document speaks for Rabbinic sages and expresses their concerns. Its compilers and authors of its sayings conceive Israel to form not a corporate community bearing political power, e.g., to inflict acts of legitimate violence, but a collection of individuals, each responsible for himself before God. Israel is made up of persons possessed of the Torah and endowed with personal free will to obey or disobey the Torah. It is that endowment that defines the dynamics of the system put forth in the collected sayings. All Israelites enjoy the freedom to choose that originates with Adam and accounts for the disaster brought on by his deed: death above all. The Torah provides the antidote to death: access to eternal life. And each individual Israelite determines for himself his fate beyond the grave, everyone accorded a trial on his own. Accordingly that shift in Israel's circumstance from the public and the political to the private and the personal requires a shift in focus to the power of the individual to make his wishes and will conform to God's—a decision of a profoundly personal nature.

The single preoccupation paramount in the program of the document occurs in its account of virtue as submission to God and conciliation of one's fellow man. These traits of the submissive, humble, accommodating individual point to a persons lacking all political aspirations, deprived of this-worldly capacity to realize their own will. Collective action is not contemplated. The individual Israelite makes God's will his own will, in hope that God will make his will that of the Israelite.

What is striking is not only the absence of a collective, communal conception of Israel as a political entity but its attribution to God of the virtues of the vanquished. The system assigns to Heaven the operating program: justice and judgment, recompense and retribution. The reward of restraint lies in submission: the surrender of free will, which brings about sin, and the subordination of one's own will to God's. As Israel is subject to the nations in the here-and-now, so the Israelite accepts God's will and conforms to his commandments. The reward for the Israelites in the world to come proves commensurate. Then this world matters only as the antechamber of the world to come, and what makes a difference in the here and now is solely submission: acceptance of the givens of this world. The document, preoccupied with the individual and his parlous existence, in fact speaks to corporate Israel about its collective situation. What we have before us is a social philosophy

rendered, paradoxically, in private and personal terms. All who aspire to live forever in affirming the eternity of their individuality comprise a moral collectivity, each individual knowing God in the same way as all the others, through the Torah.

What is affirmed by Abot is an encompassing system, not merely a mélange of episodic allegations. That system responds to the problem of evil that forms the dynamic of monotheist theology: how can God be conceived to be both all-powerful and just when the condition of humanity is contemplated: the righteous suffer, the wicked prosper, and exact justice prevails only sometimes. The solution to the problem of evil encompasses three aspects: [1] the fate of the individual in this life and after death, [2] the study of the Torah in response to the human condition, and [3] the nurture of virtue consequent upon Torah-study. [2] Study of the Torah leads to [3] virtue, which defines [1] the righteous life worthy of eternity. The destiny of individuals is to die, with judgment and advent to the age to come for those that merit it. Study of the Torah invokes the presence of God. From Torah study the Israelite learns the lessons of the virtue that secures the world to come.

Implicit in the tripartite construction—Torah-study, virtue, resurrection—are norms of belief in principles so fundamental and generative that tractate Abot in all its specificity falls to pieces if any of these norms are defied. These norms define God, his character and conscience. The one, unique God who governs is just and merciful. That premise sustains the system. God is everywhere aware of what each individual in all of creation does at all times. Human beings, accordingly, live in an enchanted realm of the divine person's perpetual presence, subject to supervision yielding a detailed record of all their actions and attitudes. That record is examined when individuals die, with results that are articulated, as we have seen.

Before a single sentence in Abot can have been written, therefore, three convictions had to prevail. First, God, who forms a presence and a personality everywhere, is just, and rules of rationality pervade creation. Second, man is like God in possessing free will and is responsible for the choices that he makes. Third, the Torah forms the medium for the encounter with God in the world, especially at meals. In that context, heresy consisted of three contrary convictions. There is no judge and there is no justice. Man is not subject to retribution for his actions. The Torah forms a tradition, an act of culture, but not the record of the words of the living God. What is implicit in Abot and therefore attested as norms of conviction is made explicit as heresy, a passage to which we shall return:

> A. All Israelites have a share in the world to come,
> B. as it is said, "your people also shall be all righteous, they shall inherit the land forever; the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified" (Is. 60:21).
> C. And these are the ones who have no portion in the world to come:
> D. He who says, the resurrection of the dead is a teaching that does not derive from the Torah, and the Torah does not come from Heaven; and an Epicurean [who denies divine judgment and retribution].
> Mishnah-tractate Sanhedrin 10:1

Here we find explicit statements of the norms implicit in tractate Abot: resurrection, judgment, and the Torah, all in the form of heresies: denial of the Torah, of judgment, and therefore of resurrection as critical to the Torah's construction of human existence.

JACOB NEUSNER

NOTE

[1] But see now Guenter Stemberger, "Mischna Avot. Fruehe Weisheitsschrift, pharisaeisches Erbe, oder spaetrabbinische Bildung?" in *Zeitschrift der neutestamentliche Wissenschaft*, 2005.

Piyyut

PIYYUT (pl. *piyyutim*; related term: "*payyetan*," the composer of piyyutim). A poetic composition created to substitute for, adorn, or preface the Jewish liturgy. The Hebrew term derives from the Greek (ποιητής/poietes) (something made, created), related to the English words "poetry." The term may have been coined to distinguish the works as a new style of poetry, distinct from the biblical psalm (*shir, mizmor*) and works in the biblical style.

"Piyyut" can refer to any Jewish poetry composed for a religious context. Typically, however, the term is reserved for poems embellishing the statutory liturgy or other rituals. The earliest piyyutim were written for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. By the mid-sixth century C.E., other liturgies, primarily holidays and the Sabbath, were augmented with poems. Eventually, poems were composed to embellish almost all rituals, including circumcisions, weddings, and domestic observances.

Piyyutim were first composed in the land of Israel. The earliest full-fledge piyyutim are from the Byzantine period. Although the Babylonian authorities initially resisted liturgical variation and diversity, piyyutim eventually distinguished the rites of all premodern Jewish communities. In the modern period, however, piyyutim were largely eliminated from the prayer book; their language was no longer understood and they unduly lengthened the service. Nonetheless, many familiar songs and prayers from the modern Sabbath and holiday rituals are piyyutim, including "Lekhah Dodi," "El Adon," and "Unetaneh Toqef." Furthermore, many prayers are actually early piyyutim or forerunners of the genre laid out as prose rather than poetry. In the contemporary period, Jewish poets and communities have revived the concept of piyyutim, composing and selecting new poems for specific events.

Due to their long history and unique position in the Jewish tradition, piyyutim add to our understanding of diverse topics, including the development of Jewish literature, the creation and formation of Rabbinic writings, and Jewish biblical interpretation. Perhaps the most difficult task faced by the scholar of piyyutim, however, is delineating the origins of these texts.

Origins of Piyyut

Early piyyutim, such as those of Yose ben Yose, appear as fully developed, complex works of poetry; prior stages of development are not obvious from the extant works that have survived. Further complicating the matter of origins, the roots of piyyut are bound up with the issues of Second Temple and Rabbinic styles of worship. Nevertheless, it is possible to reconstruct the literary and cultural matrix from which piyyutim emerged.

Medieval scholars considered piyyut a subversive response to religious oppression. For example, Pirqoi ben Baboy (eighth-ninth century, Babylon) recalls a tradition that piyyutim arose after the Emperor Justinian prohibited recitation of the statutory prayers. This may refer to Justinian's prohibition of "deuterosis" in Novella 146 in the sixth century. Rabbi Judah ben Barzillai of Barcelona taught that piyyutim arose "at a time of forced apostasy," when teaching Torah was prohibited; the precise situation to which he alludes is unknown. According to both these traditions, the dual liturgical and didactic-exegetical functions are primary; artistry simply enabled them to work without detection. However, while Byzantine or Sassanian persecution may have increased the importance of piyyut, the roots of the form lie in earlier centuries.

It is impossible to determine a *terminus a quo* for piyyut. The earliest texts, whether classified as "piyyut" or "proto-piyyut" may date to the Second Temple period. Nor is it possible to distinguish the genesis of piyyut from the early history of the statutory prayers. Prayers are often "poetic," and poetry is often embedded in prayer. It is not clear whether the piyyutim arose out of a rebellion against fixed prayers or if they reflect a time when the liturgy was still taking its

final shape. The relationship between piyyut and prayer is a given; the precise nature of their connection, however, remains to be deciphered. As for the authors of piyyutim, it is unlikely that many congregations could afford the full-time services of a payyetan. Such congregations would be wealthy and urban. However, it is possible that smaller, outlying communities could have commissioned poems for special events or holidays, or that piyyutim (or payyetanim) could have circulated more widely. In any case, old piyyutim were reused sufficiently that they were often preserved and copied centuries after their original composition. It is also possible, based on the content of these poems, that they originated in synagogues associated with Rabbinic academies or under Rabbinic intellectual auspices.

The earliest forerunners of piyyutim, including texts used liturgically, display an affinity for biblical style, like other forms of post-biblical poetry, as well as some innovations. Formal features, such as the acrostics and parallelism common in early piyyut, are found in biblical poetry. In this respect, the piyyutim resemble the pseudo-psalms of the Qumran *Hodayot*. However, unlike biblical and biblicizing works, the piyyutim develop the unfixed rhythmic, but not metrical, tendencies of biblical poetry into a variety of fixed rhythmic and metrical patterns. *Heikhalot* mystical poems and Talmudic epigrams fix the number of words in a verset, while the early payyetanim fixed the number of stresses within a line. As a result of this new emphasis on rhythm, piyyutim diminish the structuring role that semantic parallelism played in the biblical style of writing.

From the fifth century on, piyyutim stand out for their use of end-rhyme, a feature absent from biblical poetry. End-rhyme may originate in the repetitive refrain, like that found in Psalm 136. Such a "proto-rhyme" can be found in the works of Yose ben Yose (fourth-fifth centuries C.E.). For example, each line of Yose ben Yose's *tekiʿata* ends in the word *qol* ("sound"); the congregation may have participated in the recitation of this theme-word "refrain." End-rhyme becomes a hallmark of the Classical period of poetry, which begins with the work of Yannai, several generations after Yose.

The language of the piyyutim, while heavily indebted to the vocabulary of the Bible, freely adapts post-biblical usages of words and often reflects non-standard, even inventive, grammar. Payyetanic idiom is intensely intertextual, suggesting familiarity with Rabbinic aggadah and employing vocabulary attested in Rabbinic sources. Post-biblical period poetic texts, such as those from Qumran and fragments preserved in Rabbinic sources, hew more closely to the biblical model in terms of both language and grammar.

Relation to Qumran Poetry

Poetic texts from Qumran are suggestive of developments also evident in the piyyutim. The "angelic liturgy" preserved in the Dead Sea Scrolls contains poems for each Sabbath of Qumran's annual calendar. While the aesthetics of these works is distinctive and their fixation on angelology recalls Heikhalot literature more than the piyyutim, by the fifth century, piyyutim are likewise written for specific Sabbaths.

Qumranic supplications (*tehinnot*) resemble later Jewish *selihot* in form and content. Thematically, the motif of "remembrance" in such Qumranic poems recalls the Rosh Hashanah Shofar service, the occasion for which the earliest piyyutim were written. Formally, these Qumran poems, much like the Shofar service of Yose ben Yose, include not only poetic units but appended clusters of biblical verses. While it is highly unlikely that Qumran poetics directly influenced the early payyetanic forms, the poetry of both communities reveal an impulse towards prooftexting. The innovations common to both Qumran poetry and piyyut seem to lie in widespread, organic developments in Hebrew literature.

Relation to Apocrypha

In general, the apocrypha are not critical to reconstructing the history of piyyut. However, the concluding chapters of the apocryphal work, "The Wisdom of Ben Sirah," contain a hymn glorifying God the Creator

(42:15–43:33) followed by a song praising "the fathers of old" (44:1–50:29), concluding with the Hasmonean High Priest, Simon. This Ben Sirah passage closely resembles the later piyyut form, the Avodah, which traces the history of the world from Creation to the construction of the Tabernacle and priestly worship. It is possible that these final chapters of Ben Sirah are, in fact, a form of Second Temple Avodah prototype.

Rabbinic References to Poetry

Mainstream "Rabbinic" literature—the midrashic compendia, the Mishnah, and the two Talmuds—are surprisingly "unpoetic" texts. There are a handful of poems in the Babylonian Talmud, primarily personal prayers and eulogies. These passages are poetic (even if typically printed as prose), employing the balanced parallelism and unfixed rhythm of biblical poetry. Like piyyutim, their language may be a blend of biblical and Rabbinic idiom. Examples would include the prayer of Mar bar Ravina recorded in B. Ber. 17a, which was subsequently incorporated into the fixed liturgy, and the prayer "Elohai Neshamah," recorded in B. Ber. 60b. We also have references to "songs" (*mizmorim*) and "acrostics" (*alfabetarin*) in Ruth Rabbah (6:4), in a passage describing the circumcision party held for Elisha ben Abuyah. These texts appear to refer to poems distinct from the liturgy, however, and we know nothing more of their form.

Conversely, Rabbinic sources may be aware of piyyutim, even if they do not contain many examples of the form. The Aleinu, reflecting the aesthetics of the earliest strata of the piyyut form, may be part of the teki'ata of the school of Rav mentioned in Y. R.H. 1:3. The wording of parts of the Amidah can be understood as piyyutim in the same early form; such units break easily into rhythmic, unrhymed, four-beat quatrains. Finally, various midrashic texts refer to the Tanna Eleazar ben Shimon as a "payyetan" (spelled variously as payyetan, *paytoi, paytus*). However, we have no poems attributed to this sage. When looking to the Rabbinic sources for clues about the origin of piyyutim, however, caution is required. The Rabbinic texts all date in their final form to a period when piyyut was already an established art form, so the poetry embedded in Rabbinic works must be dated according to external criteria rather than according to the date of the text in which the reference occurs.

Contemporary exegetical traditions are crucial to reconstructing the origins of piyyutim, in regards to form, language, and content. In piyyutim, we see the vocabulary of Rabbinic as well as biblical Hebrew. Certain phrases and rhetorical forms commonly associated with Rabbinic prose—"measure for measure," thesis-antithesis, analogous reasoning, and others—appear in a minimalist but identifiable form in the piyyutim. This suggests that prose (aggadic and halakhic) language influenced poetic rhetoric at least as much as poetic precursors. The clusters of verses found at the end of early piyyutim (as in some Qumranic forms) suggest that the origins of piyyutim lie as much in midrash—piyyutim being a form of exegesis stripped down to a bare minimum—as in late biblical poetry. Unambiguous parallels between the exegetical content of Rabbinic texts and the piyyutim further underscore the relationship of these two genres, despite differences of form.

The *targumim*—Aramaic translations of scripture—offer additional clues to the origins of the piyyutim. While the overwhelming majority of piyyutim are written in Hebrew, and the Targumim often appear tone-deaf to biblical poetics (rendering biblical poems as prose), various Palestinian targumic texts contains Aramaic-language piyyutim. These poems cluster around specific liturgical locations: the Sabbath of the New Moon of Nissan (Exod. 12); the seventh day of Passover (Exod. 15); Shavuot (Exod. 18–19); the Death of Moses (Deut. 34); the Ninth of Av (Lamentations); and the holiday of Purim (Esther). Though difficult to contextualize, these Aramaic poems seem to reflect a popular piety—and a popular language—while the Hebrew piyyutim are somewhat more "official" texts in a more scholastic language. The inclusion of poems in the liturgy, whether Hebrew or Aramaic, appears to be due to popular demand. Gaonic authorities, in particular, resisted and attempted to regulate recitation of piyyutim.

Furthermore, as tastes and communities changed, old forms of expression were discarded and would be lost without sources such as the Genizah.

Despite sharing features with other forms of Hebrew literature, aspects of the classical payyetanic style emerge which remain difficult to explain. In particular, the complex form called a *qerova* or *qedushta* (embellishing or replacing the Sabbath Amidah) appears fully developed in the sixth century. While individual units can be connected to other developments in Hebrew prosody, the intricate structure of nine poems in varied styles, ranging from baroque rhyme-schemes to "rhymed prose," remains an enigma.

Over time, the poems continued to develop, as a survey of the various forms and poets will amply demonstrate. Every Jewish community of the pre-modern world included piyyutim in its prayer books, both old compositions and new, reflecting traditions of aesthetics and interpretation as well as innovations. Printed rites contain a vast number of piyyutim, while the Cairo Genizah preserved a vast array of previously unknown works. Although the assertion that only piyyutim differentiate the rites of various Jewish communities from each other is an overstatement, it is nonetheless true that piyyutim provided one locus for Jews to introduce their own voice and artistry in the otherwise increasingly fixed text of the prayerbook. As times changed and poetic lacunae in the prayer book were filled, poets located new openings for their creative and prayerful impulses.

Major Forms and Genres

The number and variety of piyyut forms is difficult to catalogue. In later centuries they became as diverse as the poets who composed them. The earliest piyyutim appear to have substituted for the fixed liturgy, with the concluding blessings embedded in the poems. After the texts of the statutory prayers became fixed and obligatory, however, piyyutim were placed around the texts of the statutory prayers. Whether replacing the liturgy or complementing it, piyyut provided the means for a congregation or individual poet to contribute a personal voice and contemporary aesthetic to the standard service. The first poets reworked the Amidah; subsequent poets sought out new loci for their creativity, inventing new forms and styles. The major forms and liturgical stations are as follows:

High Holiday Poems

The earliest known piyyutim were composed for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur; each is embedded in the Amidah. Those poems are quite long, correlating well with the opinion cited in the Talmud: "What benedictions are made long? The benedictions of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur" (B. Ber. 10a). In terms of complexity, however, these poems are straightforward, lacking numerous poetic units and baroque forms.

The teki'ata embellished the Amidah of the Rosh Hashanah morning (or, as now, musaf) service. Like the modern Shofar service, it was divided into three major portions—Divine Kingship (*malkhuyot*), Divine Judgeship (*zikhronot*), and Divine Redemption (*shofarot*). As with the modern ritual, each unit of the early teki'ata concluded with a selection of thematically linked biblical citations. The Aleinu prayer now concluding every major service is a fragment of the Divine Kingship section of an early teki'ata.

The major poem for the Yom Kippur liturgy was the Avodah-piyyut, embedded in the Amidah where the Avodah service occurs to this day. This lengthy piyyut retells the sacred history of Israel from Creation until the rites of the High Priest in the Temple on Yom Kippur. The priestly rituals depicted recall the Avodah-service described in M. Yom. 3–5. It is possible that the final chapters of the Apocryphal text, the Wisdom of Ben Sirah, are a predecessor of this genre (see above).

Amidah embellishments

A poem embellishing the Amidah is called a qerovah. This general term is probably based on an Aramaic name for a prayer-leader, "*qarova*." The term qedushta' is used for a qerovah including the recitation of the *qedushah*. Piyyutim written for the musaf (or

possibly evening) Amidah are called *shiv'atot* and are significantly shorter than qedushta'ot. Qerovot first appear in their complete form during the Classical period; they are the earliest piyyutim written for weekly (Shabbat) recitation. Apparently, the payyetan would write a new composition for each Sabbath (akin to a cantata). It is clear from these texts that the lectionary, both Torah portion and haftarah, was still in a fluid state. Most qerovot were written for communities that read the Torah in a three to three-and-a-half year cycle (the "Triennial" cycle). This form fell out of favor with the widespread adoption of the annual (Babylonian) Torah cycle; the annual cycle rendered the majority of qerovot obsolete. Although some payyetanim continued to compose qedushta'ot for the annual cycle or holidays, the *yotzer* (see below) eventually supplanted it.

The structure of the qedushta is complex, comprised of nine poetic units prefacing the first three benedictions of the Amidah. (The shiv'ata embellishes all seven blessings of the musaf Amidah.) Poems one and two are written in rhymed couplets, form an alphabetic acrostic when taken together, and conclude with the first two benedictions of the Amidah (Avot and Gevurot). These two poems are built upon the first two verses of the Torah portion; at the conclusion of each poem, the actual biblical verse is cited and then followed by a cluster of thematically related verses. The third poem introduces the haftarah and may encode the poet's acrostic "signature." A cluster of verses also follows this poem. The remaining poetic units are somewhat more varied, but generally have the following components: poem four introduces the theme-word "qadosh;" poem five is an acrostic of ten lines, from alef to yod, written in mono-rhymed prose; poem six is a complete alphabetic acrostic developing the themes and motifs introduced in poems one and two; poem seven is an elaborate and complex rhymed form, called a *rahit* (runner); poem eight is rhymed prose transitioning to the imagery of the angelic hosts reciting the qedushah; and poem nine introduces the language of the qedushah prayer itself.

Qedushta'ot were written for regular Sabbaths as well as holidays, including the festivals and the High Holy Days. Holiday qedushta'ot are built upon the lectionary for the holiday and their form could vary somewhat from the standard Sabbath form. For example, the Yom Kippur qedushta of Qillir contains a miniature Avodah piyyut; the qedushta for Shavuot would often contain lengthy expositions on the Decalogue; and Passover qedushta'ot might embellish every verse of the Song at the Sea (Exod. 15) rather than just the initial two.

Shema embellishments

The primary piyyut embellishing the Shema is called a yotzer, after the name of the first blessing preceding the Shema in the morning liturgy. It developed somewhat after the qerova, but is still considered an early form. The earliest complete examples date to the Classical period of payyetanic composition. Like the qedushta, these poems were composed for Sabbaths and holidays, with the holiday forms diverging from the more standardized Sabbath form. In its earliest stages, the yotzer took the place of the blessings surrounding the Shema; in later centuries, however, these poems were integrated into the standardized prayers.

The typical yotzer consists of seven individual poetic units named for their liturgical station. The first unit, the "body of the yotzer" (*guf ha-yotzer*), concludes with the recitation of the first verse of the qedushah (Is. 6:3) inserted in the Shema. The second poem, the *ofan*, acts as a transition, creating a bridge to the second verse of the qedushah (Ezek. 3:12). Poem three, the *me'orah*, concludes with the actual benediction of the yotzer ("yotzer or"), the first blessing preceding the Shema. The fourth poem, "Ahavah Rabbah," embellishes the benediction of the same name. The zulat leads into the first cited verse of the Song at the Sea ("Mi Kamokha") while the next embellishes the second verse of the Song at the Sea ("Adonai Yimlokh"). The final poem—in later rites, it was split into two poems—is called the *Ge'ulah* and ends with the theme of messianic redemption.

"Ma'ariv" is the name for the piyyut that embellishes the evening Shema. Like the

Shivʿata in comparison to the qedushta, the maʿariv is shorter and simpler than the yotzer. Maʿarivim survive only for festivals, not for weekdays or Sabbaths, although some may have been composed for such occasions. Maʿarivim could have as few as two or as many as six poetic units.

Fast Days and Penitential Rites

Poems augmenting fast-day rites, including the Ninth of Av, are ancient and among the most common genres of piyyut, composed in almost every locale in each era.

The oldest form of penitential poem is the selihah. The selihah was often inserted in the sixth benediction of the Amidah (the prayer for forgiveness) or recited as part of a separate "rite of forgiveness" (*seder ha-selihot*) during the Days of Awe. In Sephardic poetry, the selihah became a highly developed poetic form with many variants. Andalusian selihot (also called *tahanunim*) could be lengthy and often involved a congregational refrain. Genres of Andalusian selihah include the *tokhehah* (self-rebuke), the *tekhinah* (a form of confession), *muqqadimah* (prefacing the shofar blast on the mornings of Elul), and the *baqqashah* (petition), of which Solomon ibn Gabirol's "Kingly Crown" is the most famous example. Ashkenazic variants on the selihah likewise developed into diverse forms, including selihot based on the binding of Isaac (*aqedot*), popular throughout medieval Europe and spreading to the East, and gezerot, which recalled the persecution of European Jews during the Crusades. The *vidui* (confession), a prayer associated with the Yom Kippur liturgy, also inspired payyetanim in both the East and West.

Qinot (laments) were first composed during the classical period. These were written primarily for recitation on the Ninth of Av and focus on themes of national tragedy and nationalist yearning. They are often creative in form. For example, the qinot of Qillir contain poetic dialogues between various literary figures, such as Jeremiah and Lady Zion, paralleled in extant aggadic traditions. Modern poets, writing after the Holocaust, participate in the tradition of laments and elegies; such works, when composed for the liturgy, should likewise be considered piyyutim.

Life-Cycle

As liturgies developed around many important milestones in the individual life, piyyutim developed as well. In form, popularity, and liturgical context, these poems can be quite unpredictable and vary greatly over time.

The first circumcision poems appear in Andalusian poetry, written in the muwashshah metrical form (called, in Hebrew, *shirei eizor*, "girdle poems") borrowed from Arabic poetry. Circumcision poems were especially popular in Eastern Jewish contexts. The most famous example is by the poet Shalem Shabazzi (Yemen, seventeenth century), who also composed epithalamia.

Epithalamia (wedding hymns) possibly developed out of the Grace after Meals recited for seven days after a wedding. Some were written for Shabbat Hatanim (the Sabbath before the wedding; in Yiddish, the aufruf). The poem by the Apulian poet Amittai ben Shefatiah (ninth century), in honor of his sister's wedding, is one of the finest of this genre. Amittai's lengthy poem draws heavily on midrashic traditions about Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. In Andalusian poetry, epithalamia are typically brief, monorhymed poems.

The elegy is another form that appears in the post-classical period. They resemble communal laments but mourn individuals. In Andalusian poetry, these poems were often written upon the death of a patron; for example, Solomon ibn Gabirol wrote at least three elegies for his patron, Yekutiel ibn Hasan. We also have examples of the elegy from Ashkenazic Jewry, such as the Rokeah's lament for his wife, Dulce, and his daughters, Hannah and Bellet. Related to these personal poems is the form called *Tsidduq ha-Din*, written for recitation at the burial service.

Other Genres

Poets composed for almost every occasion. *Hoshanot* were composed for Hoshanah Rabba, at the conclusion of Sukkot; this

form may go back to Temple times. Also among the oldest attested genres is the *Azaharah*, recited on Shavuot. Azharot poetically recount the 613 commandments given to Israel at Sinai. *Qiddush Yerahim*, sanctifying the sighting of the New Moon, and *Mishmarot*, describing the changes of the priestly watches, recall rituals of the priests in the days of the Temple. *Havdalot* were written to mark the conclusion of the Sabbath, while *Neshamot* (embellishing the prayer "Nishmat Kol Hai") were written for morning recitation on both weekday mornings and the Sabbath. In later periods, piyyutim blessing the royal authorities were composed, as well as traveler's prayers and philosophical poems (such as "Yigdal"). The genre called *reshut*, brief lyrics prefacing standard prayer texts, also became increasingly popular as the regular liturgy became more fixed, particularly among the Sephardic Jews. These short, lyrical works are masterpieces of poetic form that do not unduly lengthen the service.

Lurianic kabbalism created a pretext for the composition of new hymns. Combining the brief form and introductory function of the reshut with kabbalistic ideas of intentionality (*kavvanah*), a genre of piyyutim called kavvanot ("concentrations") came into being. These were written to precede the performance of almost any mitzvah. Of special interest is the fact that many of these kavvanot were written in the vernacular for use by women. Some were even written by women. These Yiddish piyyutim are most commonly called *tekhines* and occasionally were composed for "women's mitzvot," such as making candlewicks, lighting candles, and taking hallah. Domestic lifecycle rituals, including giving birth, seeing a child's first tooth, and kashering the house for Passover, also provided occasions for the composition of new women's hymns. These tekhines have proven an invaluable resource for scholars interested in late medieval and pre-modern domestic piety and ritual.

Of all the forms surveyed above, tekhines, reshuyot, and kavvananot have proven most inspirational for modern Jewish poets who, though not following the fixed forms of premodern liturgical poetry, still seek a place for their own voices in the context of the statutory prayers.

Major Poets and Periods

Anonymous Period

The earliest poets are not known by name. Certain features typify these early works: they rarely adduce Rabbinic motifs or employ metonymy; their language draws heavily on biblical vocabulary and is clear and unambiguous; they often employ acrostics, either from alef to tav or from tav to alef; and poetic techniques are basic, including anadiplosis (repeating a word from the end of one unit at the beginning of the next), alliteration, and repetitive end-words. The typical line is a balanced bi-cola, similar to that of a biblical poem, but with a stronger, more regular rhythm. Certain early piyyutim or poetic activities are attributed to the Rabbinic sages, but these ascriptions are dubious or perhaps misconstrued. For example, the Tanna Eleazar bar Simon is called a "payyetan" (Lev. Rabbah 30:1) but we have no works of his composition. The Palestinian Amora Yohanan bar Nappaha is said to have composed the still-used High Holiday hymn, "Uvekhen ten pahdekhah," while Abba Arikhah (Rav), a third century Amora from Babylonia, is credited with writing the teki'ata from which the Aleinu was excerpted (Y. A.Z. 3a; Lev. Rabbah 29:1). Non-liturgical poems are attributed to rabbis, as well. The Tanna Pinhas ben Yair composed elegies (M. Sot. 9:5), as did the Babylonian Amoraim Bar Qippoq and Bar Abin (both ca. fifth century C.E.), recorded in B. M.Q. 25b (along with anonymous elegies). The Talmud preserves anonymous mystical poems, notably the famous Song of the Heifers (B. A.Z. 24b). The attribution of any of these works, however, is dubious at best. The earliest named payyetanim are listed by Saadia Gaon in the introduction to his rhyming dictionary, Ha-Egron. These are Yose ben Yose, Yannai, Eleazar [Qillir], Joshua, and Pinhas. All lived in the land of Israel. Of these, the most significant are the first three.

Yose ben Yose

The earliest poet whose name is known to scholars is Yose ben Yose, who lived in the Galilee, most likely during the fourth or fifth century C.E. Even in the middle ages, his biography was essentially unknown, although he acquired the epithet "the orphan" because of his name. Yose ben Yose is a transitional figure in the history of piyyutim. In style, his works resemble other poems of this period, such as the Aleinu. However, he draws more heavily on Rabbinic traditions (particularly midrashic collections and the Palestinian Talmud) than earlier poets and he makes greater use of metonymy. Yose ben Yose also experimented more with the rhyming and rhythmic forms that emerge in his time period, perhaps originating with this poet. He does not use actual rhyme, however, except on rare occasions and apparently by coincidence. His forms of expression, simple and elegant but deftly intertextual, drawing heavily on implied biblical quotations and allusions as well as Rabbinic texts and motifs, are considered significant developments in the history of Hebrew verse.

Despite these innovations, Yose ben Yose's language was steeped in biblical idiom and strikingly clear. He is the only non-Andalusian poet cited by the medieval grammarian Jonah ibn Janah, and early modern scholars, impressed by his lucidity, suggested an Andalusian origin for the poet. (Others, mislead by the honorific epithet, "High Priest" in some copies of his works, suggested Yose ben Yose wrote while the Second Temple still stood.) All of Yose ben Yose's works, of which a number survive, appear to have been composed for the High Holy Days. We have three avodot (possibly as many as ten, in fragments), a complete teki'ata, a selihah for Yom Kippur, a confessional hymn (vidui), and fragments of other works. The avodot of Yose ben Yose were particularly influential; while we know of earlier works of this genre, Yose ben Yose's provided the model for payyetanim in Italy, Babylonia, and Andalusia.

Classical Period: Yannai

The poet Yannai—not to be confused with the Amora of the same name—flourished in the land of Israel sometime between the fourth and seventh centuries. A date in the sixth century is usually accepted; he was "ancient" by the time of Saadia (882–942 C.E.). On a relative scale, his works fall between those of Yose ben Yose and Eleazar Qillir. He wrote in Palestine: the polemics in his work are exclusively anti-Christian; his name is spelled according to Palestinian convention (YNYY) rather than Babylonian (YN'Y); and his works are written for the Palestinian "triennial" Torah cycle, not the Babylonian (or "annual") cycle. He is the first poet to sign his name into his works by means of an acrostic, and his works reflect significant formal developments, particularly in rhyme, from the compositions of Yose ben Yose.

Yannai's works contain the first rhymed couplets in Hebrew poetry, as well as rhymed prose, and also highly ornate "pattern poems." This poet also draws much more extensively on Rabbinic traditions (many of which were still in formation in his era) than Yose ben Yose. The proof-texts used in his qedushta'ot are often also important lemmas in midrashic texts. Also noteworthy is the imprint of halakhic rhetoric in his poems, ranging from quotations to allusions.

Formally, Yannai is the first non-anonymous poet to compose qerovot, both qedushta'ot and shiv'ata'ot. These forms must have existed in some fashion prior to Yannai's period, but the specific precursors remain unknown. Yannai's style and language suggests a span of time after Yose ben Yose during which linguistic usage and poetic convention changed. For centuries, however, the works of Yannai were almost completely unknown—his existence was even questioned. With the discovery of almost his complete body of work in the Cairo Geniza, scholars are now in possession of works for almost every Torah portion of the triennial cycle, including holidays.

Eleazar Qillir

According to a medieval tradition, Qillir *[also spelled Qallir, Kallir, etc.]* was a student of Yannai, killed by his jealous teacher-cum-rival. It is probably true that, intellectually and artistically, Qillir is Yannai's heir, although the tradition asserting their student-pupil (and victim-murderer) relationship is dubious. Some medieval sources identified Qillir with Tannaitic scholars, either Eleazar ben Arakh or Eleazar ben Simon. In reality he lived sometime from the fifth to seventh century, certainly prior to the Muslim conquest of Palestine. He probably lived at the end of the sixth century, a generation or two (at least) after Yannai; scholars hypothesize that he lived in Tiberias, based on allusions in his works. By the tenth century, he was an object of legend.

Qillir's works are the most extensively attested and varied of the payyetanim of the early period. In addition to qedushta'ot and shiva'ta'ot, for festivals, Sabbaths and weekdays, he composed prayers for dew, prayers for rain, hoshanot, laments, and yotzerot. He also appears to have invented or popularized the *qiqlar*, a form of choral refrains introduced into various lengthier genres. The qiqlar became extremely popular in subsequent generations. Qillir's use of the yotzer-form is also important, as this form soon supplanted the qedushta in popularity, perhaps in part due to the influence of Qillir. In his hands, the qedushta increased in complexity, both in form and language.

Over time, "Qilliric" became synonymous with baroque and difficult linguistic constructions. In his famous critique of payyetanic idiom, Abraham ibn Ezra referred to Qillir's language as "a breached city, one with no walls" (comment to Eccl. 5:1). The language of Qillir's poems is so difficult that his works may have been unintelligible, in whole or in part, to his contemporary audience. Certainly his experiments in rhyme, metonymy, use of Rabbinic language and motifs, and his grammatical ingenuity proved difficult for later generations of Jews to understand. For all their difficulty, the works of Qillir are well attested, indicating great popularity throughout the Jewish world. He is richly represented in the prayer books of communities in both East and West, and the Geniza contains examples of many other works, previously unknown.

Other important poets of this period include Yehudah, Pinchas ben Eliezer, Simeon bar Megas, Haduta ben Abraham, Joshuah Ha-Kohen, and Joseph ben Nissan. All these poets flourished in and composed for Jewish communities in the land of Israel, most likely the Galilee.

Post-Classical Poets

Yose ben Yose, Yannai, and Qillir are the great, early payyetanim. Piyyutim continued to be written for centuries after they lived, however, in every place Jews lived and prayed.

In the post-Classical period East, Saadia Gaon (882–942 C.E.; Egypt and Babylon) stands out as an outstanding early poet (among his many noteworthy activities); indeed, he was an important voice in overcoming Eastern (Babylonian) opposition to the inclusion of piyyutim in the liturgy. An Egyptian, Saadia lacked the Babylonian hostility to the liturgical innovation and was influenced by—indeed enamored of—Palestinian poetic forms. He thus served as a conduit between communities and actively legitimized liturgical innovation. While Saadia's language can be extraordinarily difficult, much like Qillir whom he admired, his innovations in form (particularly rhyme-scheme), content (philosophy), and language (especially a return to biblical classicism) anticipate the subsequent developments in Andalusian poetry. Saadia composed primarily in classical forms, writing qedushta'ot, yotzerot, prayers for dew, avodot, and azharot, among others. His language and forms develop from the Palestinian models and do not display overt influence from Arabic prosody.

Many of the important poets of Andalusian tradition—especially Abraham ibn Ezra, Moses ibn Ezra, Solomon ibn Gabirol, and Judah Ha-Levi—were payyetanim, composing sacred as well as secular poetry (although the distinction between these two can be difficult to delineate). These poets rejected the allusive, innovative language of Qillir and the other early poets, especially the use of loan-word, overt references to Rabbinic

literature, and non-standard grammar. Abraham ibn Ezra, in particular in his comment on Eccl. 5:1, assailed the language of the Palestinian poets. However, while their language is consciously biblicizing in lexicon and grammar and they clearly favor the "plain" sense of the Bible, the Andalusians nonetheless drew on Rabbinic motifs and language.

As a group, these poets are especially significant for their (controversial) introduction of Arabic meters and aesthetics into the forms of Hebrew poetry. As noted above, they also began to create new forms, in particular the personal elegy and the reshut. Dunash ibn Labrat introduced Arabic metrics to Hebrew verse in the tenth century. The lyrical style of the Andalusian poets differs so greatly from the aesthetics of the Palestinian payyetanim and their heirs that some do not consider them to be the same genre of Hebrew literature. Another innovation was the introduction of philosophical themes into religious poetry. For example, Solomon ibn Gabirol's "Kingly Crown" is a masterpiece of neoplatonic poetry. The reshuyot of Abraham ibn Ezra and Judah Halevi are likewise clearly influenced by traditions of classical philosophy.

Although the Andalusians rejected the Qilliric style of poetry, the poets of the Classical period were the models for developments in Hebrew poetry in Italy and Ashkenaz—essentially, throughout medieval Christendom. The great Italian Jewish poets were Silano (Venosa, ninth century), Amittai ben Shefatiah and his son, Shefatiah (Apulia, ninth century), Solomon Ha-Bavli (Rome, mid-tenth century), the Qalonymides of Lucca and later Mainz, and the Anaus family of Rome. Much as had been the case with Saadia, in this period we see a growing coalescence of Jewish leadership functions, as communal leadership, Rabbinic status, and payyetanic profession fused into a single figure. The Italian poet-rabbis carried Palestinian-Jewish prayer traditions—including forms of poetry—into Germany, creating a link between Palestinian and Ashkenazic liturgical traditions..

The great German payyetanim include the tosafist, Simeon bar Isaac (Mainz, mid-tenth century), the first payyetan known to be born in Germany; the great Talmudist, Rabbeinu Gershom ben Judah, "the Light of the Exiles" (Metz, late tenth century; Ephraim ben Isaac of Regensburg (twelfth century), a noteworthy tosafist; Ephraim ben Judah of Bonn (twelfth century); and Eleazar ben Judah of Worms, the Rokeah (late twelfth century). Indeed, almost every Ashkenazic scholar of note, from Italy to England, composed (or was credited with composing) at least some piyyutim.

In this period in European Jewish history, the yotzer became increasingly popular and its form considerably more complex. Nishmat-piyyutim and a wide array of selihot and qinot were also written, reflecting the history and perceived reality of the medieval Jewish communities, particularly in the wake of the first two Crusades. In general, the Ashkenazic poems explicitly refer to Rabbinic sources and employ Rabbinic idiom as well as innovative grammatical coinages. In regards to content, the poets included anti-Christian polemics (coining many neologisms to designate the ruling powers), mystical themes (particularly heikhalot motifs and the kavod-mysticism of the Hasidei Ashkenaz), and references to folklore, often based on apocryphal and pseudepigraphic works.

Later (Pre-Modern) Poets

Piyyutim continued to be composed throughout the Jewish world in the later medieval period. In each community, the poetry reflected local aesthetics and interests. Late Byzantine poets, including Benjamin ben Zerah (eleventh-twelfth century) and Benjamin bar Samuel (twelfth century), display fascination with Shi'ur Qoma mysticism, Sefer Yetzirah, name mysticism, gematria, angelology, and Heikhalot traditions. At the same time, Andalusian aesthetics influenced aspects of form, as can be seen in the work of Abraham ben Isaac and his son, Moses ben Abraham of Thebes (thirteenth century). This synthesis of Palestinian mysticism and Andalusian aesthetics climaxes in the work of the kabbalistic poets, including Isaac Luria himself. Luria composed the Sabbath hymns "Atqinu Se'udata" and "Azammer Bi-Shevahin." The Sabbath song "Yom Zeh

Le-Yisrael" is attributed to Luria, as well. Other Lurianic poets would include Solomon ben Moses Alkabetz (Safed, sixteenth century), the author of "Lekhah Dodi," and Israel Najjarah (Damascus, late sixteenth century), author of "Yah Ribbon" as well as the "Shavuot Ketubah." Works by the Lurianic mystics permeated the Ashkenazic and Sephardic rites of the later Middle Ages. Gradually, the distinctive rites of the old communities, Eastern and Western, began to merge into more unified liturgical practices. Shared hymnic repetoires is evidence of this increasing homogeneity.

Starting in the sixteenth century, we find female poets composing liturgical works (primarly in Yiddish), particularly under the influence of Lurianic and Hasidic mysticism. Most noteworthy among these are Sarah Rebecca Rachel Leah Horowitz and Sarah bas Tova (both Ukrainian, eighteenth century), both of whom display a knowledge of biblical, Rabbinic, and Kabbalistic texts and traditions not usually associated with women of their day. Anonymous Yiddish poetry, sometimes composed by men but attributed to women for "authenticity," can also be found beginning in this period. Folk customs, such as making candlewicks, provided new occasions for poetic creativity. Some of these poems were written explicitly for women for devotional use, but others were written for familial and synagogue settings.

Modernity

During the Enlightenment, as part of the overall liturgical reform taking place in Europe and the United States, many piyyutim were purged from the prayer book because they were no longer understood, often not recited anyway, and resulted in excessively long services if they were included. In the modern age, however, new poets are reinventing the piyyut, although they may not give that name to their creations. These changes to liturgy are part of the continuing process of prayer book reform taking place within non-Orthodox communities. Notable among the English-language "payyetanim" are Ruth Brin, Jeff Klepper, Marcia Falk, Marge Piercy, and Debbie Friedman. The works of major modern Hebrew poets, including Hayyim Nahman Bialik, Zelda, Sh. Shalom, and Naomi Shemer, have also been introduced into the prayer books of non-Orthodox congregations, both in Hebrew and in translation. Furthermore, old piyyutim and songs are being revived, particularly tekhinot and qinot for Tisha b'Av and Yom Ha-Shoah.

Relation of Piyyutim to Other Literatures

Piyyutim embed biblical interpretation in a poetic-liturgical framework, serving both to teach and entertain while keeping the statutory prayers adaptable. As a result of these multiple factors, the piyyutim relate in complicated way to other sources and influences. Externally, the dominant culture in which the poems were composed must be taken into consideration: Byzantine and Roman Christianity in the West and Muslim domination of the East. Internally, the poetry reflects other developments, such as the influence of Rabbinic exegesis, the Karaite schism, and the rise of Kabbalism. Many important aspects of piyyutim can best be understood as they relate to a variety of literatures, from antiquity and the middle ages.

Midrash

The payyetanim of the Anonymous and Classical periods lived and wrote in a period when the Palestinian Jewish exegetical traditions were still developing. As a result, the relationship with midrashic traditions—not necessarily in their current literary form—can be difficult to delineate. The question of "dependence" quickly becomes bound up in the vexing question of how one dates the known midrashic compendia and it should not be assumed that one text—midrashic or payyetanic—is the "source" of the other. Nonetheless, connections between the two genres are evident in both content and form.

Similarities of aggadic content between piyyut and midrash are easy to detect. For example, a qinah by Qillir depicts Jeremiah, at God's behest, summoning the patriarchs

and matriarchs to lament on behalf of Israel after God has permitted the Temple's destruction. The poet writes: "Arise Jeremiah—why do you keep silent?/Go, summon the ancestors, and Aaron and Moses/Let the shepherds come and raise a lament . . ." (*Seder Ha-Qinot*, p. 102). Though the specific form and details are the poet's invention, the poem recalls a passage from Lamentations Rabbah: "The Holy One, blessed be He, said to Jeremiah: 'Do you feel no anguish for Me and My children? Go, summon Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and Moses from their graves, for they know how to weep'" (proem 24). When poem and proem are compared, the parallels are not exact; for example, the poem presents the pleas of Jacob's concubines, Bilhah and Zilpah, absent from the extant midrashim. In such instances, we cannot know if the poem preserves a "lost" aggadic tradition or if the poet invented these stanzas out of an aesthetic desire for completeness.

Many piyyutim from the Anonymous and Classical eras presents similar challenges. Often, the poets seem to draw on extant traditions, working on a level of allusion that seems impossible to explain or comprehend without recourse to the lengthier midrashic treatments. The proof texts in the qedushta'ot support this idea of interdependence; in many cases, the verses clustered at the end of a poetic unit occur in midrashic texts as important lemmas. In other cases, the poet's choice of supporting verse or the entire aggadic scenario may be unique. In these cases, we cannot know if the basis is the poet's own inspiration or whether a prose parallel, now lost, once existed.

Commonalities of form are not as easy to detect as parallels in content. Midrashim are prose, written in Rabbinic Hebrew alone or mixed with Jewish-Palestinian Aramaic. Piyyutim are poetry and payyetanic Hebrew is distinctive, a blend of biblicisms, neologisms, and unique grammatical coinages. Nevertheless, clear rhetorical parallels exist between the two forms, suggesting that certain piyyut forms are, in fact, distillations and translations of wordier prose tropes. For example, the prose midrashic form, "just as (keshem she-) . . . so, too (kakh gam) . . ." appears in piyyutim in a biblicized form: "just as (kemo) . . . so too (lakhen)." In some cases, the midrashic language of "measure for measure" (*middah keneged middah*, expressed in the language of "be-lashon . . . bo . . .") makes a direct appearance in piyyutim. For example, in Yannai's piyyut for Genesis 11, we find the line: "In the language (be-lashon) with which they sinned/by it (bo) they were punished/They said, "Come (havah), let us go up!" but You said, "Come (havah), let us descend." The phrase, "Come, let us descend" is a quotation from Gen. 11:7. The parallel phrase, "Come, let us ascend" is Yannai's invention. He coined it on the basis of the tower-builders' use of "come" in Gen. 11:3 ("Come, let us make brick") and 11:4 ("Come, let us build a city"). Midrash Tanhuma notes this word-play as the basis for a "measure for measure" homily, but the poet's use of pseudo-quotation dramatizes and heightens the effect. Other forms of verbal analogy, thesis-antithesis, and parsing out of verses (rhetorical tropes familiar from midrash) occur in piyyut as well.

Another important difference between the prose and poetic variants of aggadic rhetorical forms lies not in the phrasing, which may be exact or "translated" into biblical vocabulary but simple verbosity. The prose texts have the luxury of drawing out their interpretation, supporting it with proof texts that explicate the meaning. The piyyutim distill the same idea to its essence, lacking the explication, multivocality, and supporting quotations of the lengthier, literary texts.

These patterns continue in the post-Classical piyyutim, both Eastern and Western. The issue of dependence, however, becomes simpler in later periods, when we know that the poets had access to written sources similar, if not identical, to what we now possess.

Targum

The relationship of piyyut to midrash, while not free of uncertainty, is nonetheless evident from multiple perspectives. The connections to targum (Aramaic translations of Scripture) are less evident, particularly because targumim are not only prose but are in Aramaic. Nonetheless, there are often intriguing overlaps between the aggadic content

of the piyyutim and expansions in the targumim. At least in theory, the targumim were, like the piyyutim, performed synagogue literature. It may be, then, that the targums could provide a vehicle by which the laity would have acquired the knowledge necessary for understanding the allusions encoded in the piyyutim. For example, the targum of the Song of Songs interprets the biblical text as a cryptic summary of the history of Israel from the Exodus to the messianic redemption. It resembles the interpretations of the Song of Songs found in Classical and post-Classical piyyutim composed for Passover, structured on the text of the Song of Songs. Piyyutim by Yannai, Qillir, Solomon Ha-Bavli, Simeon bar Isaac, and Meshullam bar Qalonymus were all composed on the same model. The extant midrashim on Song of Songs preserve similar motifs to these poems and the targum, but not in the same linear, narrative fashion. Manuscript evidence attests to the wide popularity of the targum of Song of Songs in contrast to the limited distribution of Songs Rabbah, suggesting that the targum is potentially an important source to consider. Detailed study of the relationships among targum, midrash, and piyyut demand further scholarly attention.

Talmud

Talmudic aggadah, like midrashic aggadah, often parallels payyetanic motifs, although the Talmud is cited less frequently in the critical editions. Of particular interest is the fact that no motifs exclusively attested in the Babylonian Talmud appear in works by the Anonymous and Classical era payyetanim. Parallels do exist with the Palestinian Talmud, however. This fact supports the geographic location assigned to all of these poets. Later payyetanim, particularly in Ashkenaz, do adduce motifs from the Babylonian Talmud, which is not surprising. Many of the medieval poets were famed tosafists steeped in that text.

It should also be noted that piyyutim, like midrashic compendia and the Talmuds, are not exclusively aggadic in content. From the earliest periods—Yannai and later—piyyutim often display an interest in using and even teaching halakhah. This is most evident in the genre called "azharah" (admonishment) written for Shavuot but it is also common when the poets composed for Torah portions that were halakhic in content. In the early piyyutim, it is noteworthy that non-normative opinions are sometimes cited; for example, Yannai follows the position of the House of Shammai in a poem dealing with menstrual purity laws, while in another poem, he describes a practice relating to the purity laws that is supported by neither Talmud. By the Middle Ages, however, the halakhah incorporated into the poems is normative.

Liturgy

Liturgy is one of the most obvious sources to explore in connection to the piyyutim. The earliest academic studies of piyyutim examined them as a facet of medieval liturgical development. More recently, as our understanding of both piyyut and liturgy has grown in sophistication, it has become apparent that many of the statutory prayers are themselves poems, although they are typically printed as prose. These prayer texts display the aesthetics of the Anonymous poems, lacking rhyme but marked by strong rhythm and parallelism. Later piyyutim, from the time of Yannai on, assume the structure of the statutory prayers and suggest that whatever the status of the wording of these prayers, the Rabbinic framework was well established by the Byzantine period.

Piyyutim are critical sources for understanding the crystallization liturgical rubrics and their wording. The earliest piyyutim appear to take the place of statutory prayers. For example, the qedushta'ot and shiv'ata'ot substitute for the Sabbath Amidah; only the concluding blessings are consistent from week to week. In the post-Classical period, piyyutim of the same genres are inserted around the by-then-fixed language of the statutory prayers. The question thus arises: do the piyyutim reflect a "rebellion" of *kavvanah* (intentionality, personalization) against the *qeva* (fixed prayers), or do they present us with a picture of liturgical practice before the statutory prayer texts had been fixed? To an extent, the Rabbinic texts (for exam-

ple, M. Ber. 4:3) and traditions support the idea of piyyutim as a rebellion, particularly given the rejection of piyyutim by the Babylonian academies. These texts depict the promulgation of a fixed, obligatory, universal liturgy by the sages of Yavneh immediately after the destruction of the Temple. However, such readings of Rabbinic texts are probably simplistic or anachronistic. The alternative hypothesis, that piyyutim reveal a gradual process of crystallization of prayer texts, with the concluding blessings reflecting an early "thematic" fixity, later followed by textual fixity, seems more probable and is, to an extent, supported by Palestinian Jewish sources.

Importantly, we should note that we have no piyyutim reflecting a liturgical framework other than that indicated by the Rabbinic sources. In both form and content, these poems suggest that the congregations in which these poems were recited were "Rabbinic." Hebrew piyyutim, in particular, do not offer evidence of non-Rabbinic synagogue worship.

Philosophy and Mysticism

Much in the way that piyyutim incorporated aggadic motifs, they also represent popularizations of intellectual concepts, including philosophy and mysticism. The earliest piyyutim, for example, often recall heikhalot (chariot) mysticism and its poetic texts. Typical early piyyutim do not actually cite any heikhalot texts, nor do they reproduce noteworthy features of the heikhalot hymns, such as the *nomina barbara*, complex divine names, depictions of the divine chariot or throne, or detailed descriptions of the heavenly hosts. However, the qedushta'ot and yotzerot both build towards the mystically-charged qedushah prayer, a prayer traditionally associated with angelic recitation (note, also, the angelic liturgy of the Dead Sea Scrolls). The qedushah was a popular and powerful text, and the piyyutim incorporate a vague but enthusiastic angelology in the units closest in proximity to this third benediction of the Amidah. The early piyyutim, then, contain a relatively tame but tantalizing acknowledgment of their contemporary mystical traditions. Allusion to heikhalot traditions becomes more overt in later Ashkenazic works, reflecting the active interest of the Hasidei Ashkenaz in these mystical traditions and their role in preserving many of the important texts.

Later poets, both in Sephardic and Ashkenazic contexts, introduce philosophical content to the poems, particularly Neo-Platonism. This is most obvious in the works of the Andalusians, with the liturgical works of Abraham ibn Ezra, Judah Halevi, and Solomon ibn Gabirol standing out. Many of these poets also wrote philosophical treatises—Ibn Gabirol's "Meqor Hayyim," Halevi's "Kuzari"—and similar philosophical teachings often appear in their poetic works. Ibn Gabirol's "Kingly Crown," recited to this day in some Sephardic congregations on Yom Kippur, offers a dramatic example. Neoplatonic motifs also appear, perhaps unexpectedly and in a form indicating a less direct chain of transmission, in the poetic works of the Hasidei Ashkenaz.

Finally, as noted above, Lurianic kabbalah, emphasizing intentionality (kavvanah) in the performance of commandments and teaching the importance and power of words, provides the last of the great medieval inspirations for mystical-philosophical poetic works. Poems in Hebrew (e.g., "Lekhah Dodi"), Aramaic (e.g., "Atqinah Seʿudata"), and Yiddish (e.g., "The Tekhinah of the Three Gates" by Sarah bas Tovim) all allude directly to Lurianic kabbalistic ideas, as well as allusions to more traditional (biblical and midrashic) sources.

Christian Liturgical Poetry

Early Christian liturgies—those of the Eastern Church, including the Syriac and Byzantine Churches—contain poems that provide tantalizing parallels to early Jewish piyyutim. The works of the third century Syriac Church Father, Ephrem the Syrian, and the fifth century Greek-language poet, Romanos the Melode are highly reminiscent of the piyyutim in terms of both aggadic content and poetic form.

When the early payyetanim were dated later than they are now (often to the seventh century), scholars occasionally hypothesized that Christian poetry influenced Jewish

works. However, given the antiquity of Jewish poetry, the relationship is more complex. Early churches—perhaps by means of converts—possibly imported Jewish styles of liturgical poetry into Christian worship. Romanos, for example, was either a convert or the child of converts from Judaism.

In matters of form, content, and reception, the parallels between Jewish and Christian hymnography are instructive. The use of rhyme in the Syriac and, especially, in the Greek poems—by means of which rhyme probably entered the Latin rites, and from there the Western literary corpus—had puzzled scholars of Christian antiquity. Rhyme does not appear in Greco-Latin poetry until after the emergence and spread of Christianity. A semitic model (possibly biblical) explains Greek- and Latin-language Christian hymns that contain alphabetic acrostics ranging from A-T rather than alpha-omega or A-Z. Certain poetic forms blend biblical exegesis and liturgical function in the same way that piyyutim merge aggadah into the statutory prayers. Parallel to the resistance of the Babylonian authorities, Christian authorities in the West resisted the inclusion of Eastern liturgical poems. Western sources refer to popular religious poetry as "psalmi idiotici."

Syriac poetry, written in a dialect of Aramaic closely related to the Aramaic of the Babylonian Talmud, reflects many features of the early piyyutim, including parallelism, acrostics (both in the biblical style, alef-tav, and—non-biblically—reverse acrostics from tav-alef), choral responses, and a strong rhythm. Furthermore, in content Ephrem's hymns are often moralizing and draw on biblical texts with significant "aggadic" interpretation. One Syriac-Christian poetic form, the *enyana*, consists of literary mosaics blending poetry with scriptural quotations, much like the opening stanzas of the Jewish qedushta. The exegesis implicit in his poems offers interesting parallels to Jewish aggadic traditions, including traditions found in the piyyutim. While on the surface, many of Ephrem's poems reflect a profound antagonism towards Judaism, his style suggests the influence of Jewish literary developments. His use of such forms may even be a conscious attempt to combat the Jews of his day on their own terms, and (almost literally) in their own language.

The Greek-Christian poem called a *kontakion* (arising, significantly, in the sixth century) resembles Jewish piyyut, especially the qedushta. Both genres connect hymn to scripture, paraphrasing and interpreting the Bible in accord with communal traditions of interpretation. Common to both forms are poetic introductions, transitional stanzas, acrostics, dialogue, and rhyme. However, the overall form of the kontakion is regular and uniform, unlike the qedushta which is built out of diverse poetic units. Furthermore, the metrical scheme of the Greek kontakion is much more rigid.

A more serious difference between piyyut and kontakion involves the liturgy. The Jewish hymn is always tied to a specific prayer—in the case of the qedushta, the Amidah. The kontakion does not embellish a fixed liturgical text. However, the Byzantine poetic form called a *kanon* is structured around a specific liturgical station. The kanon was built upon the prayer-text of the "nine odes" used in for matins (eight hymns built on passages from the Old Testament and one from the Gospels). In a kanon, much as in a qedushta or—even more aptly, a shiv'ata—several stanzas embellish each ode and allude to its content prior to its citation. Both forms—qerova and kanon—thus employ paraphrase of scripture and interpolation into liturgical station.

It is not clear yet precisely how Jewish and Christian poems relate to each other; paths of direct influence, particularly by means of converts, are certainly compelling. Forms and concerns overlap, but there are no exact parallels. The possibility of common, shared origins must also be considered—roots in unknown poetics of the Second Temple period and the early centuries of the Common Era, similar to the comparisons with the Qumran poems.

Arabic Poetry

With Dunash ibn Labrat (tenth century), Sephardic poets began to incorporate Arabic poetic aesthetics, notably Arabic meter, into their works. Formal Arabic-style poetry (such as "girdle poems"), secular and sacred,

became common, although this acculturation of foreign poetic norms was controversial. The biblicizing classicism of these medieval Sephardic lyrics likewise reflects the values of the dominant culture, which regarded the language of the Qur'an as the pinnacle of beauty. Jewish poets turned to their scripture—the Hebrew Bible—as a wellspring of equally beautiful rhetoric. The influence of Arabic poetry, unlike any from Christian works, was conscious and deliberately introduced.

Karaite Poetry

Karaite liturgy was, typically, strictly biblical, focusing primarily on recitation of the Psalms and other scriptures. The statutory prayers of Judaism were rejected as "rabbinisms." Some Karaites, however, also composed piyyutim, although not without controversy. It appears that while they rejected Rabbanite scriptural interpretation, at least some Karaites and Karaite communities were open to Rabbanite liturgical innovations.

Larger Importance of Piyyut Studies

The piyyutim are related to many writings, Jewish and non-Jewish, Hebraic and non-Hebraic. As a result, the study of piyyut can contribute to knowledge in many related fields, literary, historical, and cultural from antiquity to modernity. At present, most piyyut scholarship has focused on relatively "traditional" areas: textual criticism, identification of authorship, history of genres and forms, and overlap with other Jewish texts. Great potential exists for further study, however, connecting piyyut to a number of fields. A few examples will illustrate the importance of piyyutim in a variety of contexts.

Piyyutim and Scriptural Interpretation

The place of piyyutim in the history of Jewish biblical interpretation is just now being recognized. The idea that piyyutim arose in place of the "deuterosis"—sometimes identified with midrash or targum—forbidden by Justinian or other late antique proscriptions against Torah study is unlikely. Piyyutim were well established by the sixth century. Nonetheless, the relationship between exegesis and liturgy is intriguing. In many cases, piyyutim present familiar aggadic traditions in variant forms. The content of early piyyutim suggest the existence of fluid, pre-literary forms of these interpretations. In later poems, the exegetical motifs reflect aggadic developments on-going in Judaism. Even more intriguing are those cases where piyyutim present otherwise unattested motifs and interpretations. Whether such works reflect "lost" midrashim or poetic ingenuity cannot be determined, but either way, the poems offer an additional source of aggadah (and, in some cases, halakhah) from antiquity and the Middle Ages.

The piyyutim are more than additional repositories of aggadah, however. They represent a source of aggadah as presented in the ancient synagogue. As noted above, piyyutim—along with midrash (especially the proem) and targum—complete a triad of "synagogal" literary forms. The actual "life setting" of targum and midrash is disputed, however. Those who assume a synagogal context (or an oral basis) for these texts risk oversimplifying a complex situation. Piyyutim, however, were composed for and recited in synagogues from antiquity on. When there is overlap among the three genres, the case for arguing popularity of an interpretation becomes much stronger. The prose genres help explain how the distilled motifs of the piyyutim were "fleshed out," while the piyyutim argue for a widespread familiarity with the content.

Content conspicuously missing from the piyyutim likewise suggest certain exegetical boundaries. This is particularly true with regard to mysticism. The absence of explicit heikhalot motifs from the piyyutim of Yannai—who wrote at a time when these texts were in formation—suggests that the mystical teachings were not as exoteric as might initially appear to be the case, given the angelology of the qedushta as a genre. Similarly, Sarah Rebecca Rachel Leah Horowitz's decision to include explicit Kabbalistic teachings in the Hebrew version of her "tekhineh of the matriarchs" but to exclude these same motifs from her Yiddish "translation" conveys in clear terms her acquiescence

to societal norms about access to esoteric teachings.

Rabbinic History and the Synagogue

As discussed above, piyyutim have played an important role in reconstructing the development of Jewish (and Christian) liturgy in its early phases. The form and content of the Hebrew poems supplement what is known from Rabbinic sources, responsa, and prayer books; for scholars of this critical epoch, piyyutim are important puzzle pieces helping to create a more complete and complex picture.

In historical terms, the piyyutim have also been of tremendous importance in reconstructing certain aspects of practice in the ancient synagogue, beyond the liturgy. The qerova in particular has helped scholars reconstruct the Torah reading cycle as practiced in antiquity. In turn, they help us fathom the education of the ancient constituency which would have heard and enjoyed—and possibly learned from—these poems.

Qerovot are of particular interest. These works indicate the first and second verses of the weekly Torah portion as well as the first verse of the haftarah, the lectionaries used in the communities in which these poems were recited can be reconstructed. The ability to recreate haftarah cycles has been especially illustrative. Together with other forms of synagogal literature—particularly the proem and the targumic expansion—scholars have constructed a variety lectionaries and Torah-reading customs. It appears that the Torah cycle in the land of Israel was much less fixed overall than that of Babylonia, with differing portions and fluidity in the haftarah. Some piyyutim even appear to hint at secondary haftarah portions. The knowledge gained from piyyutim has enriched, though not simplified, modern understandings of Torah reading practices in antiquity.

The piyyutim of the Anonymous and Classical periods have shed light on nontextual arguments, as well. For example, piyyutim are an important source in understanding how "Rabbinic" the synagogue in late antiquity was. Based on the liturgical poems, it seems that those communities employing the payyetanim were "Rabbinic," in the sense that the piyyutim contain so many teachings associated with Rabbinic texts (halakhic as well as aggadic). These works also only exist for the liturgy attested to in Rabbinic literature; we have no evidence for a non-Rabbinic Jewish liturgy of the late antique period. At the same time, certain genres of piyyutim, such as the mishmarot and even the Avodah, support theories concerning the preservation of (or revival of, or nostalgia for) "priestly" customs and their inclusion in synagogue ritual well into the Byzantine period. Aramaic piyyutim may be less "Rabbinic" than Hebrew piyyut, but this, also, is not clear. Overall, the payyetanic corpus suggests that the perceived tension between "Rabbinic" and "non-Rabbinic" worship in the Byzantine synagogue may be overstressed in some modern scholarship. Piyyutim provide evidence of Rabbinic influence on at least some synagogues at an early date, but we cannot know how widespread such piyyutim were prior to the Middle Ages, at which time Rabbinic leadership of the synagogue can be assumed.

Intriguingly, piyyutim frequently correspond to motifs preserved in other Byzantine synagogue media. Jewish understanding of the Zodiac offers one example of how textual and figurative media can be mutually enlightening. Numerous poems based on the Zodiac have been found, indicating a public and popular interest in the meaning of the Zodiac symbols. Targum Pseudo-Jonathan to Lev. 26:1 appears to qualify the prohibitions against figurative art, allowing mosaic pavements on sanctuary floors. Both these texts are literary complements to the Zodiac floor mosaics found in early synagogues (six of them in the land of Israel). These three sources of information—piyyut, targum, and mosaics—do not provide all the answers, but when read together with midrashim that mention astrological interpretation, it is clear that zodiacal representations are not necessarily "non-Rabbinic." Much work remains to be done in the field of Jewish culture in late antiquity and piyyutim are proving an illustrative source.

The piyyutim have also been important

sources for understanding medieval Jewish modes of piety. The Hasidei Ashkenaz, in particular, regarded the texts of the piyyutim as significant texts for study as well as prayer. Medieval Ashkenazic sources defended the antiquity of the piyyutim, as well as their form and language, against the polemics of the Sephardic Jews. Traditional prayer texts (including piyyutim) were laden with significance and studied by means of gematria. The most outstanding source relating to the study of prayer from this community is Abraham ben Azriel's thirteenth century piyyut commentary, "Arugat Ha-Bosem." It attempts to explain the obscure references in the piyyutim with which the author was familiar. Abraham ben Azriel displays vast erudition in all branches of medieval Jewish learning, including midrash, both Talmuds, mystical traditions and philosophy. The need for commentary, however, highlights the difficult and enigmatic place of many of these poems in the medieval context. The Hasidei Ashkenaz defended an art form that most Jews of medieval Western Europe did not comprehend. This tension between tradition and comprehension endured until the Enlightenment. The Hasidei Ashkenaz also composed their own piyyutim. Works such as "the Hymn of Glory" ("Shir ha-Kavod," also called "Anim Zemirot") are significant for understanding their unique form of mystical piety.

Piyyutim and the Hebrew Language

The language of the piyyutim is something of a puzzle. Nominal and verbal forms often appear idiosyncratic and non-grammatical, apparently coined to suit nascent rhyme schemes and rhythmic constraints. Particularly with regard to the early poems, scholars are divided over whether payyetanic language—including both noun forms and verbal conjugations—preserves a living form of Hebrew in the Byzantine period or merely displays linguistic playfulness. Most likely there is some truth in each claim. Sometimes the language of the early piyyutim can be lucid, if innovative. In other cases, usually driven by demands of form—particularly alliteration, rhythm, and rhyme—it can be completely, even notoriously, opaque. While forms of words were often distinctive, the basic lexicon was generally biblical, with some influence from Rabbinic Hebrew and Aramaic and, less commonly, Greek. (The Apulian poet Amittai included refrains in the vernacular Italian of his time.)

The popularity of the piyyutim was probably due to some extent to intangible and incalculable factors, such as delight in rhythm or melody, but in the earliest period it would be hasty to discount the importance of content. The complexity of Hebrew in these poems may reflect the linguistic—and educational—heterogeneity of the communities supportive of piyyutim. It is important to note that the longer poems, the qedushta'ot in particular, often contained specific stanzas in relatively simple language. Factoring in the use of "accessible" language and allowing for the possibility of discussion, it may be that most, if not all, people could grasp the basic content of the poems. (Similar problems confront scholars of early Christian hymnography.)

By the Middle Ages, the comprehensibility argument is settled. Payyetanic language, closely identified with the poet Qillir but developed into its most extreme form by Saadia Gaon and his pupils, was no longer a living dialect. Its non-biblical grammar made it a favorite target for criticism from the Andalusian grammarians, most notably Abraham ibn Ezra. Judah al-Harizi (late twelfth century) mocks communities (laity and leadership alike) who do not understand the language of their own hymns. In the West, Qilliric piyyutim were the model until the Enlightenment. The artificial diction of the piyyutim continued to be the norm, although it was generally more restrained. By the early Middle Ages, however, it seems unlikely that the many people who heard these poems appreciated their content. At this point, the delight leading to the preservation of the poems appears to have been entirely in the sound-play and traditionality of the ornate poems. Eventually, however, inability to comprehend the piyyutim overcame auditory pleasure and the forces of tradition, leading to the removal—or abrupt apocopation—of many poems in the course of prayer book reform.

Regardless of comprehension, piyyutim

are important sources for reconstructing the sound of Hebrew in the Middle Ages. The wealth of vocalized payyetanic texts uncovered in the Cairo Genizah is of particular significance. Piyyut manuscripts, pointed according to various Palestinian vocalization systems, have permitted scholars to reconstruct the pronunciation of Hebrew in various times and locations. Furthermore, the intensive rhyme schemes presented in piyyutim starting with Yannai have helped philologists reconstruct certain phonetic developments, such as the weakening of gutterals (alef, ayin, and heh) and the vocalization of the second masculine singular suffix as -akh rather than -kha. These features are not unique to the piyyutim; rather, they provide important supporting and refining evidence for extant linguistic theories, enhancing our understanding of Palestinian Hebrew and Aramaic.

The language of the great medieval Spanish poets, discussed above, is important not for what it reveals about the state of Hebrew as a living language in Andalusia but for what it teaches about cultural values and aesthetics. This period stands out for the attempts to purge sacred language of neologisms and purify the poetry of exaggeration in form and Rabbinicism in content, in favor of classicizing biblicism and Arabic lyricism. The parallels with Karaism should not be overlooked. However, the Andalusian poets were willing to sacrifice certain aspects of innate Hebraic rhythm in service of Arabic quantifiable meter. Judah Halevi's rejection of the Arabic influence on Hebrew and its subsequent distortion of some aspects of the Hebrew language—whether sincere or a rhetorical trope—reflects both the awareness of and discomfort with the alterations imposed on Hebrew in the Arabic milieu.

Piyyutim and Hebrew Literature

Finally, the piyyutim are tremendously important in terms of understanding and appreciating the development of Hebrew literature. End-rhyme, which may have its origin in piyyutim or related poems, appears to have entered Western literature when early synagogue poetry became a model for early Christian poetry. Pattern-poems and rhymed prose also make their earliest appearances in Hebrew poetry in the period of Classical Piyyut. The complex name-acrostics, which began with Yannai's signature of his name, developed into complete benedictions, giving full name and names of relatives, and blessings as well. These intricate acrostics added an additional level of baroque formalism to the Ashkenazic poems. Unfortunately, the increasing formal demands—particularly rhyme, meter, and acrostics—often resulted in poems that were virtuoso in artistry but lacking in meaningful content. Such mediocre works diminished the reputation of piyyutim of the Classical (Qilliric) style overall.

While the graceful lyrics of the Andalusian poems are the most popular pre-modern poetry in the present day, the Byzantine and Western piyyutim, particularly of the Classical period, can be dazzling in their own right. Such works are rich in complicated sound-play, puns, deft biblical allusions, and witty reformulations of aggadic motifs. The major poetic forms—especially qedushta and yotzer—are, in reality, miniature anthologies of multiple poetic genres. The popularity of piyyutim in antiquity and the Middle Ages, evident in the sheer number of poems preserved in the Cairo Genizah as well as in printed and manuscript prayer books and the number of individuals engaged in poetic creation, suggests that aesthetically they were pleasing to the ear as well as (most likely) the intellect. Unfortunately, many of the performative aspects of the piyyutim—music, dramatic presentation, choral responses, and congregational involvement—are largely lost to us.

In the modern world, the impulse at least partially responsible for the piyyutim—the desire to adorn the statutory prayers with contemporary works of poetry and song—continues. While contemporary Jewish poets writing for the synagogue do not hew to the formal designs of pre-modern piyyut, the attempt to blend artistry of form with meaningful content, often introducing sacred

texts if not the actual lectionary, show that the history of piyyut has not, in fact, come to an end.

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Political Theology of Judaism: What Do the Classical Sources of This Religion Say about Politics?

Scripture, the Mishnah, and the Talmuds set forth a profoundly political conception of religion. The Pentateuch portrays Israel as "a kingdom of priests and a holy people," and further takes for granted that the that "kingdom" or "people" forms a political entity, capable of exercising legitimate violence. By "Israel," the social entity brought into being by those that accepted God's rule set forth in the Torah, Instruction, of Sinai, Scripture therefore understands not merely a church or a voluntary community but an empowered society, with a government, laws, institutions. Scripture's own portrait of the type of government varies. The Pentateuch read whole takes for granted that Israel is governed by God through the prophet, Moses. Moses further appoints an administration to deal with conflict and secure the public order, and that administration exercises authority and inflicts the death penalty for civil and religious infractions. Other writings describe an Israelite monarchy, still others, a government by the priesthood based on the Temple in Jerusalem. The picture of Israel as a family, descended from Abraham and Sarah, conflicts with this account of a Israel as an empowered and political entity and plays no role in the articulation of the politics of the holy people.

The Rabbinic canon of antiquity carries forward the premise of Scripture that the holy people forms a political entity in the here and now, not merely a supernatural community of the faithful at the end of days such as is the conception of Israel in the Dead Sea library. The politics expressed through the Mishnah's Judaism speaks of a social entity treated as a political one as well, of the holy people of "Israel" classified as a state. The Judaism of the Mishnah set forth for its social entity (called, as the social entity of every Judaism is called, "Israel") not merely a mythic and theological picture but also a political structure. When people would speak of "a state of (being) Israel," therefore, they would also address "the State of Israel," the Jewish State, understanding that they spoke of a political entity like other such political entities. Therefore this Judaism became in mind and imagination a state not only of (autonomous) being but also of (shared and social) doing, not alone of ontology but of society. That is why this Judaism defines a locus for inquiry into more than theological science, into, especially, social science: economics, politics and philosophy. The key generative problematic of the Mishnah is the interplay of divine will and the human will, and the relationships that require political scrutiny

are between God and Israel, not among citizens or between the state and its citizens. Religion and politics are integrated.

At issue in a politics is who does what to whom, so we turn forthwith to the Mishnah's account of the sanctions that accompany the law, and who enforces those sanctions, God or the Temple authorities or the sages of the Torah, its three institutional foci of power. The encompassing framework of rules, institutions and sanctions is explained and validated by appeal to the myth of God's shared rule. That dominion, exercised by God and his surrogates on earth, is focused partly in the royal palace, partly in the Temple, and partly in the court. The political myth of Judaism thus explains who exercises legitimate violence and under what conditions, and furthermore specifies the source for differentiation. The myth consequently serves a particular purpose—which is to answer that particular question. Indeed, the Judaic political myth comes to expression in its details of differentiation, which permit us to identify, and of course to answer, the generative question of politics.

Analyzing myth by explaining sanctions draws our attention to the modes of legitimate violence that the system identifies. There we find four types of sanctions, each deriving from a distinct institution of political power, each bearing its own mythic explanation. The first comprises what God and the Heavenly court can do to people. The second comprises what the earthly court can do to people. That type of sanction embodies the legitimate application of the worldly and physical kinds of violence of which political theory ordinarily speaks. The third comprises what the cult can do to the people. The cult through its requirements can deprive people of their property as legitimately as can a court. The fourth comprises conformity with consensus—self-imposed sanctions. Here the issue is, whose consensus, and defined by whom? Across these four types of sanction, four types of coercion are in play. They depend on violence of various kinds—psychological and social as much as physical. Clearly, then, the sanctions that are exercised by other than judicial-political agencies prove violent and legitimately coercive, even though the violence and coercion are not the same as those carried out by courts.

Predictably, when we work our way through sanctions to recover the mythic premises thereof, we begin with God's place in the institutionalization and execution of legitimate violence. Of course, the repertoire of sanctions does encompass God's direct intervention, but that is hardly a preferred alternative or a common one. Still, God does commonly intervene when oaths are violated, for oaths are held to involve the person who invokes God's name and God. Further, whereas when faced with an insufficiency of valid evidence under strict rules of testimony, the earthly court cannot penalize serious crime, the Heavenly court can and does impose a penalty. Clearly, then, God serves to justify the politics and account for its origin. Although God is never asked to join in making specific decisions and effecting policy in the everyday politics of the state, deliberate violation of certain rules provokes God's or the Heavenly court's direct intervention. Thus obedience to the law clearly represents submission to God in Heaven. Further, forms of Heavenly coercion suggest a complex mythic situation, with more subtle nuance than the claim that, overall, God rules, would indicate. A politics of rules and regulations cannot admit God's *ad hoc* participation, and this system did not do so. God joined in the system in a regular and routine way, and the rules took for granted God's part in the politics of Judaism.

How Judaism Makes Its Statement Through a Theory of Politics and the Social Order

At stake in the politics is God's rule on earth, and the Kingdom of Heaven is realized by the supernatural, holy community of Israel (not to be confused with an ethnic group of the same name, or a nation-state of the same name) exercises political power at every point in its statement. Politics, articulated through normative law, from the Mishnah forward forms the key to Judaism.

To examine the politics of the Mishnah

in its historical context, we must recall that, among prior Judaisms only the scriptural system finally defined with the closure of the Pentateuch had set forth a politics at all. The appeal to politics in setting forth a theory of the social order of their particular "Israel" will have provoked some curiosity among, for one example, the framers of the Judaism portrayed by the library uncovered at Qumran, and, for another, the framers of the Christianity of the Land of Israel in the first century. Both groups, heirs of the ancient Scriptures as much as were the framers of the Mishnah, found in politics no important component of the systemic structure they set forth. By contrast, the integration, within a systematic account of the social order, of a politics will not have surprised the great figures of Greco-Roman philosophy, Plato and Aristotle for example. That fact takes on consequence when we note that the Pentateuch simply does not prepare us to make sense of the institutions that the politics of Judaism for its part designs. The Pentateuchal politics invokes priest and prophet, Aaron and Moses, but knows nothing of a tripartite government involving king, priest, and sage; nor do the royal narratives concede empowerment to the priest or sage. On the other hand knowledge of the *Politics* of Aristotle and the *Republic* of Plato to the contrary gives perspective upon the politics of the Mishnah.

The Pentateuch contributes nothing to the Mishnah's scheme of routine government by king and high priest and sages' court. The Pentateuch's prophetic rule and constant appeal to God's immediate participation in the political process, and, in particular, in the administration of sanctions and acts of legitimate violence, by contrast falls into the category of a politics of charisma. The difference is not merely that the Pentateuchal institutions appeal to prophet and priest; it also is a difference in how the structure works as a political system. For the Pentateuchal myth that serves to legitimate coercion—rule by God's prophet, in the model of Moses, governance through explicitly revealed laws that God has dictated for the occasion—plays no active and systemic role whatsoever in the formulation and presentation of the politics of Judaism. Philosophical systems use politics, by contrast, to set forth the rules and unchanging order of legitimate exercise of power, its teleology and its structure. Plato and Aristotle make no place for godly intervention on any particular occasion.

And for their part, among the types of political authority contained within the scriptural repertoire, the one that the Mishnah's philosophers reject is the prophetic and charismatic, and the one that they deem critical is the authority governing and governed by rules in an orderly, rational way. The principal political figures—king, high priest, the disciple of the sage—are carefully nurtured through learning of rules, not through cultivation of gifts of the spirit. The authority of sages in the politics of Judaism in particular does not derive from charisma, e.g., revelation by God to the sage who makes a ruling in a given case, or even general access to God for the sage. So the politics of the Pentateuch—structure and system alike—in no way forms the model for the politics of the Mishnah.

Judaism's Story of Legitimate Violence

That brings us to the nub of the matter: the exercise of legitimate violence in the law of Judaism from the Mishnah forward. How, specifically, do the sanctions that embody Judaism's politics yield an account of the governing political myth? In the Mishnah's picture, some of the same crimes or sins for which the Heavenly court imposes the penalty of extirpation are those that, under appropriate circumstances (e.g., sufficient evidence admissible in court) the earthly court imposes the death-penalty. That is, the Heavenly court and the earthly court impose precisely the same sanctions for the same crimes or sins. The earthly court therefore forms down here the exact replica and counterpart, within a single system of power, of the Heavenly court up there. There are crimes for which the earthly court imposes penalties, but for which the Heavenly court does not, as well vice versa. The earthly and Heavenly courts share jurisdiction over sexual crimes and over serious religious

crimes against God. The Heavenly court penalizes with its form of the death-penalty religious sins against God, in which instances a person deliberately violates the taboos of sanctification. And that fact calls our attention to a third partner in the distribution and application of power, the Temple with its system of sanctions that cover precisely the same acts subject to the jurisdiction of the Heavenly and earthly courts. The counterpart on earth is now not the earthly court but the Temple. This is the institution that, in theory, automatically receives the appropriate offering from the person who inadvertently violates these same taboos of sanctification.

But this is an odd choice for the Mishnah, since there was then—at ca. 200 C.E.—no Temple on earth. That had been destroyed in 70 C.E. The juxtaposition appears then to involve courts and Temple, and the upshot is that both are equally matters of theory. In the theory at hand, then, the earthly court, for its part, penalizes social crimes against the community that the Heavenly court, on the one side, and the Temple rites, on the other, do not take into account at all. These are murder, apostasy, kidnapping, public defiance of the court, and false prophecy. The earthly court further imposes sanctions on matters of particular concern to the Heavenly court, with special reference to taboos of sanctification (e.g., negative commandments). These three institutions, therefore, exercise concrete and material power, utilizing legitimate violence to kill someone, exacting penalties against property, and inflicting pain. The sages' modes of power, by contrast, stand quite apart, apply mainly to their own circle, and work through the intangible though no less effective means of inflicting shame or paying honor.

Power flows through three distinct but intersecting dominions, each with its own concern, all sharing some interests in common. The Heavenly court attends to deliberate defiance of Heaven, the Temple to inadvertent defiance of Heaven. The earthly court attends to matters subject to its jurisdiction by reason of sufficient evidence, proper witnesses, and the like, and these same matters will come under Heavenly jurisdiction when the earthly court finds itself unable to act. Accordingly, we have a tripartite system of sanctions—Heaven cooperating with the Temple in some matters, with the court in others, and, as noted, each bearing its own distinct media of enforcing the law as well. What then can we say concerning the systemic myth of politics? The forms of power and the modes of mediating legitimate violence draw our attention to a single political myth, one that we first confronted, if merely as a generality and commonplace to be sure, at the very outset. The unity of that myth is underlined by the simple fact that the earthly court enters into the process right along side the Heavenly court and the Temple; as to blasphemy, idolatry, and magic, its jurisdiction prevails. So a single myth must serve all three correlated institutions.

It is the myth of God's authority infusing the institutions of Heaven and earth alike, an authority diffused among three principle foci or circles of power, Heaven's court, the earthly court, and the Temple in-between. Each focus of power has its own jurisdiction and responsibility, Heaven above, earth beneath, the Temple in the position of mediation—transmitting as it does from earth to Heaven the penalties handed over as required. And all media of power in the matter of sanctions intersect at some points as well: a tripartite politics, a single myth drawing each component into relationship with a single source and origin of power, God's law set forth in the Torah. The point of differentiation within the political structures, supernatural and natural alike, lies in the attitude and intention of a human being. We differentiate among the application of power by reference to the attitude of the person who comes into relationship with that power. A person who comes into conflict with the system, rejecting the authority claimed by the powers that be, does so deliberately or inadvertently. The myth accounts in the end for the following hierarchization of action and penalty, infraction and sanction: [1] If the deed is deliberate, then one set of institutions exercises jurisdiction and utilizes supernatural power. [2] If the deed is inadvertent, another institution exercises jurisdiction and

utilizes the power made available by that same supernatural being.

A sinner or criminal who has deliberately violated the law has by his or her action challenged the politics of Judaism. Consequently, God or God's surrogate imposes sanctions—extirpation (by the court on high), or death or other appropriate penalty (by the court on earth). A sinner or criminal who has inadvertently violated the law is penalized by the imposition of Temple sanctions, losing valued goods. People obey because God wants them to and has told them what to do, and when they do not obey, a differentiated political structure appeals to that single hierarchizing myth. The components of the myth are two: first, God's will, expressed in the law of the Torah, second, the human being's will, carried out in obedience to the law of the Torah or in defiance of that law. The political myth of Judaism has to explain the differentiation of sins or crimes, with their associated penalties or punishments, and so sanctions of power. And in Scripture there is a very precise answer to the question of how to differentiate among sins or crimes and why to do so. Given the position of the system of the Mishnah, the point of differentiation must rest with one's attitude or intentionality We do have a well-known story of how the power of God conflicts with the power of humanity in such wise as to invoke the penalties and sanctions in precisely the differentiated modes we have before us. That story of power differentiated by the will of the human being in communion or conflict with the word of the commanding God comes to us from the Garden of Eden. We cannot too often reread the following astonishing words (Gen. 2:15–3:23 pass.):

> The Lord God took the man and placed him in the garden of Eden . . . and the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you are free to eat; but as for the tree of knowledge of good and bad, you must not eat of it; for as soon as you eat of it, you shall die."
>
> . . . When the woman saw that the tree was good for eating and a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable as a source of wisdom, she took of its fruit and ate; she also gave some to her husband, and he ate . . .
>
> The Lord God called out to the man and said to him, "Where are you?"
>
> He replied, "I heard the sound of You in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, so I hid."
>
> Then He asked, "Who told you that you were naked? Did you eat of the tree from which I had forbidden you to eat?"
>
> . . . And the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this you have done!"
>
> So the Lord God banished him from the garden of Eden . . .

Now a reprise of the exchange between God, Adam, and Eve, tells us that at stake was responsibility: who has violated the law, but who bears responsibility for deliberately violating the law:

> "The woman You put at my side—she gave me of the tree, and I ate."
>
> "The serpent duped me, and I ate."
>
> Then the Lord God said to the serpent, "because you did this. . . ."

The ultimate responsibility lies with the one who acted deliberately, not under constraint or on account of deception or misinformation, as did Adam and Eve Then the sanction applies most severely to the one who by intention and an act of will has violated God's intention and will.

Adducing this story by itself poses several problems. First, the story-teller does not allege that Adam intended to violate the commandment; he followed his wife. Second, the penalty is not extirpation but banishment. That is why to establish what I conceive to be the generative myth, I turn to a second story of disobedience and its consequences, the tale of Moses' hitting the rock (Num. 20:1–13):

> The community was without water, and they joined against Moses and Aaron . . . Moses and Aaron came away from the congregation to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting and fell on their faces. The Presence of the Lord appeared to them, and the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, "You and your brother Aaron take the rod and assemble the community, and before their very eyes order the rock to yield its water. Thus you shall produce water for them from the rock and provide drink for the congregation and their beasts."
>
> Moses took the rod from before the Lord as He had commanded him. Moses and Aaron assembled the congregation in front of the rock; and he said to them, "Listen,

> you rebels, shall we get water for you out of this rock?" And Moses raised his hand and struck the rock twice with his rod. Out came copious water, and the community and their beasts drank.
>
> But the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, "Because you did not trust me enough to affirm My sanctity in the sight of the Israelite people, therefore you shall not lead this congregation into the land that I have given them."

Those are the waters of Meribah, meaning that the Israelites quarreled with the Lord—through which He affirmed His sanctity.

Here we have not only intentional disobedience, but also the penalty of extirpation. Both this myth and the myth of the fall make the same point. They direct attention to the generative conception that at stake in power is the will of God over against the will of the human being, and in particular, the Israelite human being.

The political myth of Judaism now emerges in the Mishnah in all of its tedious detail as a reprise—in now-consequential and necessary, stunning detail—of the story of God's commandment, humanity's disobedience, God's sanction for the sin or crime, and humanity's atonement and reconciliation. The Mishnah omits all explicit reference to myths that explain power and sanctions, but invokes in its rich corpus of details the absolute given of the story of the distinction between what is deliberate and what is mitigated by an attitude that is not culpable, a distinction set forth in the tragedy of Adam and Eve, in the failure of Moses and Aaron, and in countless other passages in the Pentateuch, Prophetic Books, and Writings. Then the Mishnah's is a politics of life after Eden and outside of Eden. The upshot of the matter is that the political myth of Judaism sets forth the constraints of freedom, the human will brought to full and unfettered expression, imposed by the constraints of revelation, God's will made known.

Since it is the freedom of humanity to make decisions and frame intentions that forms the point of differentiation among the political media of power, we are required, in my view, to return to the paradigmatic exercise of that same freedom, that is, to Eden, to the moment when Adam and Eve exercise their own will and defy God. Since the operative criterion in the differentiation of sanction—that is, the exercise of legitimate violence by Heaven or by earth or by the Temple—is the human attitude and intention in carrying out a culpable action, we must recognize the politics before us rehearses the myth of Adam and Eve in Eden—it finds its dynamic in the correspondence between God's will and humanity's freedom to act however it chooses, thus freely incurring the risk of penalty or sanction for the wrong exercise of freedom.

At stake is what Adam and Eve, Moses and Aaron, and numerous others intend, propose, plan, for that is the point at which the politics intervenes, making its points of differentiation between and among its sanctions and the authorities that impose those penalties. For that power to explain difference, which is to say, the capacity to represent and account for hierarchy, we are required, in my opinion, to turn to the story of the fall of Adam and Eve from Eden and to counterpart stories. The reason is that the political myth derives from that same myth of origins its points of differentiation and explains by reference to the principal components of that myth—God's and humanity's will and power—the dynamics of the political system at hand. God commands, but humanity does what it then chooses, and in the interplay of those two protean forces, each power in its own right, the sanctions and penalties of the system apply.

Power comes from two conflicting forces, the commanding will of God and the free will of the human being. Power expressed in immediate sanctions is also mediated through these same forces, Heaven above, human beings below, with the Temple mediating between the two. Power works its way in the interplay between what God has set forth in the law of the Torah and what human beings do, whether intentionally, whether inadvertently, whether obediently, whether defiantly. That is why the politics of Judaism is a politics of Eden. And that further explains why sages' systemic statement turned to politics as the necessary medium for its full formulation. Quite how matters were to be phrased as this Judaism crossed the frontier from the realm of the-

ory and theology to practical issues of public policy is not to be predicted on the basis of the systemic statement we have examined, which, we now see, in no way made provision for the complexities of an ordinary, diverse society. But, then, systems never do. And that accounts, also, for the incapacity of the Judaic system to negotiate with—differentiate among—outsiders, as we shall see in section v.

The Message of Judaism's Politics

A religion that expresses its theology through law, the Judaism set forth in the classical canon delivers its political statement through its legal system. This is called "the Halakhah," meaning, "the norms of correct conduct," as distinct from "the Aggadah," meaning, the rules of correct conviction, exegesis, interpretation. The Halakhah has always served as the medium of theological expression in Judaism, and it contains the message of the politics as well. The statement that is made by the Halakhah may be set forth in two parts, the one describing the problem facing God in the encounter with Man, the other the solution put forth at Sinai through the Halakhic account of the regenerate social order Israel is to realize.

The Problem

God created nature as the setting for his encounter with humanity. Creation was meant as God's Kingdom for Man's bliss. But with the sin of Man committed in rebellion against God's will, the loss of Eden, and the advent of death began the long quest for the regeneration of Man. In the unfolding of generations, ten from Adam to Noah, ten from Noah to Abraham and thence to Sinai, it was only Israel that presented itself for the encounter. But then Israel too showed itself Man. For on the other side of Sinai came the celebration of the Golden Calf.

The Halakhic Solution

What to do now? It is to rebuild God's Kingdom among that sector of Mankind that undertakes to respond to God's self-manifestation in the torah and to realize God's dominion and imperatives: the Torah, the commandments. God provided for Israel, surrogate of humanity, the commandments as a medium of sanctification for the reconciliation with God and renewal of Eden, the triumph over the grave. Freed of sin through offerings that signified obedience to God's will, by reason of repentance and atonement, signifying man's acceptance of God's will over his own, which to begin with had brought about the fall from Eden, man might meet God, the two in mutual and reciprocal commitment. Where Israel atoned for sin and presented itself as ready for the meeting, there God and Israel would found their Eden, not a place but an occasion. In overcoming the forces of death and affirming life through purity, Israel brings into being such an occasion. The Halakhah then serves as the medium of sanctification of Israel in the here-and-now, in preparation for the salvation of Israel and its restoration to Eden.

The classics of Rabbinic Judaism., the Mishnah, Midrash, and Talmuds, set forth in the Halakhah a systematic and coherent response to the Torah's account in the Pentateuch, Genesis through Deuteronomy, and in the Prophetic Books, Joshua through Kings and Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the Twelve. That account portrays the tragic situation of Man from Eden onward, the hopeful situation of Israel from Sinai onward. The Halakhah lays out how Israel's entire social order may be constructed to realize the situation represented by Eden now and to restore Eden then. But it would be this time through the willing realization of God's rule, both in the present hour and at the end of days. That actualization takes place within Israel. How will it happen? Tutored by the Torah to want by nature what God wants but will not coerce them to want—"the commandments were given only to purify the heart of man"—Israel makes itself able to realize God's will and to form his kingdom within its holy community. Through examining the Halakhah in its native categories or tractates, these propositions are shown to animate the entire Halakhic corpus, which is thus proved to embody a theological

system, one that rests firmly upon the foundations of Scripture whole and in detail.

In fact, we have in the Halakhah a reworking of two parallel stories, the story of the creation and fall of Adam and Eve from Eden, then the story of the regeneration of humanity through the Torah's formation of Israel. The two stories then are linked in the encounter of Israel and the nations, represented by the uncleanness of death that, through the disciplines of purity, Israel is to over come. The tension between them comes to its resolution in the resurrection of Israel, from death, those who know God being destined for eternal life. The two stories, adumbrated in the heads of the outline that follows, represent the native category-formations of the Aggadah, and, as is clear, the native category-formations of the Halakhah are folded into the Aggadic framework:

I. THE STORY OF MAN AND REBELLION, SIN AND ATONEMENT, EXILE AND RESTORATION
   1. Where and When Is Eden?
   2. Who Owns Eden?

II. THE PARALLEL STORY: ISRAEL AND GOD, SIN AND JUST PUNISHMENT, REPENTANCE AND ATONEMENT, FORGIVENESS AND RESTORATION
   3. Israel's Adam and Eve
   4. Sin and Atonement
   5. Intentionality and the Civil Order

III. THE STORY OF ISRAEL AND THE NATIONS, SPECIFICALLY, ISRAEL AND THE TORAH, THE GENTILES LACKING THE TORAH
   6. Enemies of Eden, Tangible and Invisible
   7. The Contest between Death and Life
   8. Overcoming Death
   9. The Kingdom of God

The sages' philosophical reading of Scripture—its Halakhah and its Aggadah alike—leads to the transformation of the Torah's account of humanity's story into the design for Israel's social order: God's kingdom, Eden realized now, restored at the end. Let us now see things whole. Here are the specific Halakhic tractates that convey the message through the norms of public conduct, and the specific details of that message, viewed whole.

1. WHERE AND WHEN IS EDEN?
   I. SHEBIIT
   II. ORLAH
   III. KILAYIM
   IV. SHABBAT-ERUBIN

By Eden Scripture means, that place whole and at rest that God sanctified; "Eden" stands for creation in perfect repose. In the Halakhah Eden stands for not a particular place but nature in a defined condition, at a particular moment: creation in Sabbath repose, sanctified. Then a place in repose at the climax of creation, at sunset at the start of the seventh day, whole and at rest, embodies, realizes Eden. The Halakhah means to systematize the condition of Eden, to define Eden in its normative traits, and also to localize Eden within Israel, the people. How so? Eden is the place to the perfection of which God responded in the act of sanctification at the advent of the seventh day. While the Land in the Written Torah's explicit account of matters, claims the right to repose on the seventh day and in the seventh year of the septennial cycle, it is the location of Israel wherever that may be at the advent of sunset on the eve of the seventh day of the week of creation that recapitulates Eden.

2. WHO OWNS EDEN?
   I. MAASEROT
   II. TERUMOT
   III. HALLAH
   IV. MAASER SHENI
   V. BIKKURIM
   VI. PEAH
   VII. DEMAI

The story expands to within the motif of Eden, the matter of ownership and possession as media for the expression of the relationship between Man and God. God accorded to Adam and Eve possession of nearly everything in Eden, retaining ownership—the right to govern according to his will—for himself. The key to the entire system of interaction between God and Israel through the Land and its gifts emerges in the Halakhah of Maaserot and its companions, which deal—along the lines of Shebiit and Erubin—with the difference between

possession and ownership. God owns the world, which he made. But God has accorded to man the right of possession of the earth and its produce. This he did twice, once to Man—Adam and Eve—in Eden, the second time to Israel in the Land of Israel. And to learn the lesson that Man did not master, that possession is not ownership but custody and stewardship, Israel has to acknowledge the claims of the creator to the glory of all creation, which is the Land. This Israel does by giving back God's share of the produce of the Land at the time, and in the manner, that God defines. The enlandized components of the Halakhah therefore form a single, cogent statement of matters.

3. Adam and Eve
   - I. Qiddushin
   - II. Ketubot
   - III. Nedarim
   - IV. Nazir
   - V. Sotah
   - VI. Gittin
   - VII. Yebamot
   - VIII. Sacralization and Intentionality

The Halakhah of the family, covering the act of sanctification of a woman by a man (Qiddushin), the marriage-agreement (Ketubah), vows and special vows, the disposition of a charge of unfaithfulness against a woman, and the severance of the marital bond of sanctification through a writ of divorce or death, does not ubiquitously invoke the metaphor of Adam and Eve in Eden. Our task, then, is to identify the principal foci of that Halakhah and to investigate the appropriate context in which it is to be interpreted. How here does Eden figure? The connection is made articulate by the (possibly later) liturgical framework in which the Halakhah plays itself out. There, in the liturgy of the marriage-canopy, the act of creation of Man is recapitulated, the bride and groom explicitly compared to Adam and Eve. Not only so, but the theme of the Land and Israel intervenes as well—two motifs dominant in the Halakhic theology examined to this point.

4. Sin and Atonement
   - I. The New Moral Entity
   - II. Sheqalim
   - III. Tamid and Yoma
   - IV. Zebahim and Menahot
   - V. Arakhin
   - VI. Bekhorot
   - VII. Meilah
   - VIII. Temurah

The Halakhah takes account of the tragedy of Eden and provides for a new moral entity, a reformed transaction accorded that entity, one not available to Adam and Eve. For God at Eden made no provision for atonement for sin, but, in the unfolding of Man's story, God grasped the full measure of Man's character and drew the necessary conclusion and acted on it. Endowed with autonomous will, Man has the power to rebel against God's will. Therefore the Halakhah finds urgent the question, how is Man, subject to God's rule, to atone for the sin that, by his rebellious nature, Man is likely to commit? The Torah to answer that question formulates the rules that govern Man both [1] when under God's dominion and [2] when in rebellion against God's will, These represent the two aspects of the one story that commences with Eden, leads to the formation of Israel through Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, God's antidotes to Adam, and climaxes at Sinai. But Israel also is Man, so that story accommodates both Adam's fall and Israel's worship of the golden calf, and, as the denouement, Adam and Eve's exile from Eden and Israel's ultimate exile from the Land. How, then does God propose to repair the world he has made to take account of Man's character and Israel's own proclivity?

5. Intentionality and the Civil Order
   - I. Legitimate Violence: Who Does What to Whom
   - II. Keritot
   - III. Sanhedrin-Makkot
   - IV. Baba Qamma-Baba Mesia-Baba Batra
   - V. Horayot
   - VI. Shebuot

The Halakhah dictates the character of (its) Israel's civil order—its political institutions

and system of criminal justice. It undertakes a labor of differentiation of power, indicating what agency or person has the power to precipitate the working of politics as legitimate violence. When we understand the differentiating force that imparts to politics its activity and dynamism, we grasp the theology that animates the structures of the politics and propels the system. The details of the Halakhah, in particular the sanctions assigned to various infractions, effect the taxonomy of power, which forms an implicit exegesis of the story of Eden, translated into reflection on the power of intentionality.

6. Enemies of Eden, Tangible and Invisible
   i. Tangible Enemies: Abodah Zarah
   ii. Invisible Enemies: Death. Ohalot
   iii. Negaim
   iv. Zabim and Niddah

The enemies of Eden take shape around the grand struggle between life and death, in the here and now meaning Israel and the gentiles, at the end of days meaning those who will stand in judgment and go onward to the world to come and eternal life, and those who will perish in the grave. Specifically, the world beyond the limits of Israel forms an undifferentiated realm of idolatry and uncleanness. Then how is Israel to negotiate life with the world of gentiles and their idolatry, corpses and their contamination? Among the sources of uncleanness, tangible and invisible, we begin with the gentiles and proceed to corpse- and comparable kinds of uncleanness. But the two—gentiles, corpses—form a single domain. The former bears exactly the same uncleanness as the latter. Gentiles, defined as idolaters, and Israelites, defined as worshippers of the one and only God, part company at death. For the moment Israelites die—only to rise from the grave. Gentiles die for eternity. The roads intersect at the grave, each component of humanity taking its own path beyond. Israelites—meaning, those possessed of right conviction—will rise from the grave, stand in judgment, but then enter upon eternal life, to which no one else will enjoy access.

7. The Contest between Death and Life
   i. Uncleanness and Sanctification
   ii. Makhshirin
   iii. Tohorot
   iv. Uqsin
   v. Kelim

The sources of change and disruption that threaten the cleanness, hence the sanctification of the Temple are the same sources that threaten the norm of cleanness of the household. If the same uncleanness affects the Temple and the table, then the only difference is one of degree, not of kind, as the Halakhah states explicitly. And the rest follows. The web of relationships between sanctification and uncleanness spins itself out into every corner of the Israelite household, where the system makes a difference. And it is the will of the householder that determines the difference that the distinction between clean and unclean is going to make. Everything is relative to the householder's will; he has it in his power to draw the household table into alignment with the altar in the Temple, that is to say, to place the table and the food set thereon into relationship, onto a continuum, with the altar and the Holy Things of the cult. This he can accomplish through an act of will that motivates an attitude of constant watchfulness in the household for those very sources of contamination that Scripture identifies as danger to the Lord's altar in the Jerusalem Temple.

8. Overcoming Death
   i. Parah
   ii. Miqvaot
   iii. Tebul Yom
   iv. Yadayim
   v. Home and Temple in Hierarchical Formation: Hagigah
   vi. Cause and Effect: Where and Why Man's Will Matters

From death and its affect upon food and drink, that is, the uncleanness caused by, and analogous to, death, we turn to the media for the restoration of life. Still water unaffected by human agency restores the natural condition disrupted by uncleanness other than that of the corpse and its ana-

logues, while by contrast purification-water systematically subjected to human intervention—constant attention, deliberate action, start to finish—alone removes corpse-uncleanness. We have then to account for the exclusion of man from the one process, the radical insistence upon his inclusion, in full deliberation, within the other. Uncleanness that comes about by reason of any cause but death and its analogues is removed by the Heaven's own dispensation, not by man's intervention: rain-fall, sunset suffice. Ordinary purification is done by nature, resulting from natural processes. But as to persons and objects that have contracted uncleanness from death, nature on its own cannot produce the kind of water that bears the power to remove that uncleanness and restore the condition of nature. Only man can. And man can do this only by the highest level of concentration, the most deliberate and focused action. Man's act of will overcomes the uncleanness of death, just as man's act of deliberate rebellion brought about death to begin with. Man restores what man has disrupted. Had the Halakhah wished in its terms and categories to accomplish a reprise of the story of man's fall, it could not have made a more eloquent statement than it does in the contrast between the Halakhah of Miqvaot and that of Parah.

9. The Kingdom of God
    - i. Accepting the Yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven and the Commandments
    - ii. Berakhot
    - iii. Hullin
    - iv. Megillah
    - v. Rosh Hashanah
    - vi. Pesahim
    - vii. Sukkah
    - viii. Moed Qatan
    - ix. Besah
    - x. Taanit

As much as Man by his nature rebels against God, Man tutored by the commandments willingly accepts God's will and therefore his rule. What are the Halakhah's media for the reformation, regeneration and renewal, of Man? The Halakhah here legislates for not Eden but the kingdom of God. For Sinai's answer to Eden's question transcends the matter of sin and atonement and encompasses the conduct of the ordinary, everyday life lived under God's rule. The normative deals with the normal, so the final solution to God's dilemma with Man—how to accord Man free will but to nurture in Man freely-given love for God—lies in the Torah. That way of life in accord with God's rule means to form the Paideia, the character-building education to transform Man by making Israelite Man's freely-given obedience to God as natural as was the First Man's contumacious rebellion against God. That is why the Halakhic provision for life in God's kingdom moves from the ordinary day and its duties to the table and its everyday nourishment, then to the meeting with God that is seasonal and temporal, and finally to the climax of the system, confrontation with routine crisis.

This précis shows how a few large motifs form of the details of the Halakhah a single coherent system, one that tells a story. Clearly, the Halakhah works from Scripture forward. But, being theologians, systematic thinkers, intent on a philosophical reading of religion in quest of a coherent, proportionate, and rigorously argued statement, they do not randomly rework this detail or that. Rather, the sages' philosophical reading of Scripture—its Halakhah and its Aggadah alike—produces a coherent theology. It leads to the transformation of the Torah's account of humanity's story into the detailed design for Israel's social order. The details all find their place within the structure of the whole, and in its workings, the system that sages have constructed animates the whole, the parts working well together to make a simple statement.

That is easily set forth. In its actualities Israel embodies—or is meant to embody—God's plan for Mankind, not individual, but as a social entity: God's kingdom, Eden both realized in the here and now and restored at the end. The Rabbinic Judaism embodied, actualized and realized in the Halakhah is the religion that publicly, in the sight of all humanity, realizes now and for eternity the imperatives of God, made

manifest at Sinai, in the Torah and that thereby shows the way to eternal life with God.

So we have followed the about the interior architectonics of Israel's being that the Halakhah tells through concrete action-symbols. The Halakhah brings about the transformation of the here and the now, of the particular occasion (thus: place and time and event, mostly in nature) into the embodiment, the exemplification, of the abstract ground of being. Involved is relationship of realms of the sacred: the rules of engagement between and among God, Land, Israel, time, place, circumstance. Through the fabric of everyday life of the Land lived out in the household, village, and the holy metropolis, Jerusalem (the three dimensions of the social order of which the Halakhah takes account), Eden is read as not historical moment but situation and occasion. That then precipitates thought about the human condition. But Eden does not impose narrow limits on the amplification of that thought. It is not the only condition.

There is also the situation brought about by the second great theme, besides Eden, that is implicit in the Halakhah. It is God's self-manifestation in the Torah: the occasion for the reform and renewal of Man through Israel, the counterpart and opposite of Man. The Halakhah therefore will be shown to begin with Eden but to progress to the realization of God's kingdom within holy Israel's social order, conceiving of Israel both enlandized (defined within the Land) and utopian (located anywhere), as the category of the Halakhah requires.

A third massive motif involves Eden once more, this time under God's rule, and it too engages with the Torah's account of Israel at Sinai. It concerns the re-embodiment of Israel, the restoration that comes about not alone in the end of days when the Messiah comes, but in the here-and-now of the workaday world. It is there that Israelite Man formed by the discipline of the Torah learns both to atone for, and to overcome, his natural propensity willfully to rebel against God. Within the social order of an enlandized Israel moral Man constructs a godly society. That reading of the Written Torah and translation of its law into the canons of ordinary life speaks in the acutely-present tense to portray for Man a worthy future well within Man's own capacities to realize: "the commandments were given only to purify the heart of Man," and "All-Merciful wants the heart," as the Talmud frames matters. Therein I identify the theology of the Halakhah: massive, closed system that, in dialogue with the Aggadah but in its own category-formations and language, says the same thing about many things, numerous details bearing a single message.

How Does Judaism's Politics Deal with Non-Believers?

At the end we turn to how the Halakhic system sets forth the relationship of holy Israel to everybody else, meaning in the context of the system only one thing: idolaters, severally and jointly. Idolatry represents the tangible enemy of God. When the Halakhah takes up the world beyond Eden, it invokes its own metaphors for death: the gentiles in the tangible world outside the genealogical frontier of Israel, corpse-uncleanness in the invisible, if equally tangible, world beyond the limits of the altar, the Temple, and Jerusalem. The world beyond the bounds of Israel—the people in its household walls, the Land within its frontiers—forms an undifferentiated realm of idolatry and uncleanness. Then how is Israel to negotiate life with the world of gentiles and their idolatry, corpses and their contamination? The Halakhah constructs, indeed defines, the interiority of an Israel sustaining God's service in a world of idolatry: life against death in the two concrete and tangible dimensions by which life is sustained: trade and the production of food. No wonder Israel must refrain from engaging with idolatry on days of the festivals for idols that the great fairs embody—then especially.

Among the sources of uncleanness, tangible and invisible, we begin with the gentiles and proceed to corpse- and comparable kinds of uncleanness. The two—gentiles, corpses—form a single domain. The former bears the same uncleanness as the latter. A picture in cartographic form of the theologi-

cal anthropology of the Halakhah, indeed, would portray a many-colored and much-differentiated Israel at the center of the circle, with the perimeter comprised by all-white gentiles. For white is the color of death, how the unclean graves are marked off to warn priests and others concerned with cleanness. Gentiles, like their idols, constitute a source of uncleanness of the virulence of corpse-uncleanness. What detail of the Halakhah embodies the principle that Israel stands for life, the gentiles like their idols for death? An asherah-tree, like a corpse, conveys uncleanness to those who pass underneath it, so M. Abodah Zarah 3:8: "And he should not pass underneath it, but if he passed underneath it, he is unclean."

Not only so, but gentiles, always meaning idolaters, and Israelites, defined as worshippers of the one and only God, part company at death. Only for the moment do Israelites die, for they are to rise from the grave. Gentiles die for eternity. The roads intersect at the grave, each component of humanity taking its own path beyond. Israelites—meaning, those possessed of right conviction—will rise from the grave, stand in judgment, but then enter upon eternal life, to which no idolater will enjoy access. So, in substance, humanity viewed whole is divided between those who get a share in the world to come and who will stand when subject to divine judgment and those who will not. And humanity also is divided between Israel, acutely susceptible to a broad variety of sources of uncleanness but also capable of attaining purity, and the gentiles, uniformly unclean always. That is the meaning of the fact that all gentiles—even righteous ones—are sources of the undifferentiated uncleanness of the corpse.

When a gentile abandons idolatry and accepts the dominion of God exercised through his self-manifestation in the Torah, he loses the corpse-uncleanness that afflicted him, is immersed and transformed, and as if newly born in the rite of immersion. Nothing in his past affects his new status as part of Israel (though his status within Israel is subject to those same criteria of hierarchization and differentiation that govern all others within Israel in one way or another). Then the Halakhah distinguishing those who love from those who hate God takes as its religious problem the concretization of that distinction, the demonstration of where and how the distinction in theory makes a huge difference in the practice, the conduct, of everyday affairs. And, as we shall see, invisible, though tangible, sources of uncleanness also form analogues to death.

Idolatry—rebellious arrogance against God—encompasses rejection of the entire Torah. The religious duty to avoid idolatry is primary; if one violates the religious duties, he breaks the yoke of commandments, and if he violates that single religious duty, he violates the entire Torah. Violating the prohibition against idolatry is equivalent to transgressing all Ten Commandments. Differentiated by genealogy and other indicators, all Israelites are defined by submission to God and acceptance of the Torah as God's will. That conclusion is sustained by a simple inversion of subject and predicate in the Halakhic definition of Israel, which we have already encountered. The Halakhah states, "All Israelites have a share in the world to come. And these are the ones who have no portion in the world to come: He who says, the resurrection of the dead is a teaching that does not derive from the Torah, and the Torah does not come from Heaven; and an Epicurean" (M. San. 10:1). Then we may say, those who have a share in the world to come are those who affirm God, self-manifest in the Torah.

What accounts for the identification of idolatry with death? The transaction of Eden lies at the foundation: rebellion. Idolatry forms a deliberate act of rebellion against God. Gentiles are deniers, their status imposed by their own act of will. That is why, in full deliberation, they are unreconstructed Man, destined for the grave and classified as corpses even while alive. So the Halakhah maintains that Israel encompasses those who will enjoy eternal life, gentiles are those who perish at the grave. The contrast between life and Israel, death and gentiles, is concrete and practical, for the spit and urine of the gentile are unclean, since gentiles are classified as a Zab (Leviticus 15). That means even a gentile who accepted the seven commandments that pertain to the children of

Noah falls outside of the system of differentiated contamination that pertains to Israel, e.g., they are not subject to the uncleanness described at Leviticus 13–14, and Israelite itself prior to the giving of the Torah was not subject to that uncleanness. If Eden stands for life with God, then beyond the limits lies the realm of death, tangible in gentiles, invisible in corpse- and other sources of uncleanness, including the idol. In this world, death is to be held at a distance, uncleanness is to be kept away, from the Temple altar, and, by analogy, from the table of the Israelite household, and, in the world to come, gentiles, idolaters, molder in the grave and death itself will die.

How does the Halakhah respond in practical terms to these convictions? The Halakhah takes as its task the negotiation between Israelites and the pagan world in which they live: how are they to conduct themselves in accord with the Torah so that at no point and in no way do they give support to idolatry and so betray the one and only God. In its basic exposition of the theme of idolatry, the Halakhah rests squarely on the foundations of Scripture, supplying rules and regulations that carry out the fundamental Scriptural commandments about destroying idols and everything that has to do with idolatry. But the Halakhah so formulates matters as to transform the entire topic of idolatry into an essay on Israel's relationships with the gentiles, who, as I said, are idolaters by definition. The Halakhah addresses the condition of individuals, the ordinary life of common folk, rather than concentrating on the situation of all Israel, viewed as a collective entity. The Halakhah therefore tends to find its problem in the condition of the private person and in the interiorities of his life in the Israelite community.

For the Written Torah the community at large forms the focus of the law, and idolatry is not to be negotiated with by the collectivity of holy Israel. In its Land Israel is to wipe out idolatry, even as a memory. Scripture is clear that Israel is to obliterate all mention of idols (Exod. 23:13), not bow down to gentiles' gods or serve them but overthrow them and break them into pieces (Exod. 23:24): "You shall break down their altars and dash in pieces their pillars and hew down their Asherim and burn their graven images with fire" (Deut. 7:5). Israelites are commanded along these same lines:

> You shall surely destroy all the places where the nations whom you shall dispossess served their gods, upon the high mountains and upon the hills and under every green tree; you shall tear down their altars and dash in pieces their pillars and burn their Asherim with fire; you shall hew down the graven images of their gods and destroy their name out of that place (Deut. 12:2–3).

Accordingly, so far as the Written Torah supplies the foundations for the treatment of the matter by the Oral Torah, the focus of discourse concerning the gentiles is idolatry. Scripture's Halakhah does not contemplate Israel's co-existing, in the Land, with gentiles and their idolatry.

But the Halakhah of the Mishnah-Tosefta-Yerushalmi-Bavli speaks to a world that is not so simple. The Land belongs to Israel, but gentiles live there too—and run things. The Halakhah of the Oral Torah commences with the premise that gentiles live side by side (whether or not in the Land of Israel) with Israelites. Then Israelites have to sort out the complex problems of co-existence with idolatry. And that co-existence involves not whole communities, corporate Israel, and the peoples, whoever they may be, but individuals, this Israelite living side by side with that gentile. The Halakhah deals first with commercial relationships, second, matters pertaining to idols, and finally to the particular prohibition of wine part of which has served as a libation to an idol. The whole is regularized and ordered. There are relationships with gentiles that are absolutely prohibited, particularly occasions of idol-worship; the Halakhah recognizes that these are major commercial events. When it comes to commerce with idolaters Israelites may not sell or in any way benefit from certain things, may sell but may not utilize certain others, and may sell and utilize yet others. Here, we see immediately, the complex and systematic mode of thought that governs the Oral Torah's treatment of the topic vastly transcends the rather simple conception that animates Scripture's discussion of the same

matter. There are these unstated premises within the Halakhah:

1. what a gentile is not likely to use for the worship of an idol is not prohibited;
2. what may serve not as part of an idol but as an appurtenance thereto is prohibited for Israelite use but permitted for Israelite commerce;
3. what serves idolatry is prohibited for use and for benefit.

In reflecting upon relationships with the gentiles, meaning, idolaters, the Oral Torah moreover takes for granted a number of facts. These turn out to yield a single generalization: gentiles are assumed routinely to practice bestiality, murder, and fornication. Further negative stereotypes concerning idolaters occur.

The Halakhah then serves as the means for the translation of theological conviction into social policy. Gentiles are assumed to be ready to murder any Israelite they can get their hands on, rape any Israelite women, commit bestiality with any Israelite cow. The Oral Torah cites few cases to indicate that that conviction responds to ordinary, everyday events; the hostility to gentiles flows from a theory of idolatry, not the facts of everyday social intercourse, which, as we have seen, sages recognize is full of neighborly cordiality. Then why take for granted gentiles routinely commit the mortal sins of not merely idolatry but bestiality, fornication, and murder? That is because the Halakhah takes as its task the realization of the theological principle that those who hate Israel hate God, those who hate God hate Israel, and God will ultimately vanquish Israel's enemies as his own—just as God too was redeemed from Egypt. So the theory of idolatry, involving alienation from God, accounts for the wicked conduct imputed to idolaters, without regard to whether, in fact, that is how idolaters conduct themselves. That matter of logic is stated in so many words:

> Sifré to Numbers LXXXIV:IV:
> A. A. ". . . and let them that hate you flee before you:"
> B. And do those who hate [come before] him who spoke and brought the world into being?
> C. The purpose of the verse at hand is to say that whoever hates Israel is as if he hates him who spoke and by his word brought the world into being.

The same proposition is reworked. God can have no adversaries, but gentile enemies of Israel act as though they were his enemies:

> D. Along these same lines: "In the greatness of your majesty you overthrow your adversaries" (Exod. 15:7).
> E. And are there really adversaries before him who spoke and by his word brought the world into being? But Scripture thus indicates that whoever rose up against Israel is as if he rose up against the Omnipresent.

Israel hates God's enemies, and Israel is hated because of its loyalty to God (a matter to which we shall return presently):

> J. "Do I not hate those who hate you, O Lord? And do I not loathe them that rise up against you? I hate them with perfect hatred, I count them my enemies" (Ps. 139:21–22).
> K. And so too Scripture says, "For whoever lays hands on you is as if he lays hands on the apple of his eye" (Zech. 2:12).
> L. R. Judah says, "What is written is not, 'the apple of an eye' but 'the apple of his eye,' it is as if Scripture speaks of him above, but Scripture has used an euphemism."

Now the consequences of these propositions are drawn:

> V. And whoever gives help to Israel is as if he gives help to him who spoke and by his word brought the world into being, as it is said, "Curse Meroz, says the angel of the Lord, curse bitterly its inhabitants, because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty" (Judges 5:23).

The proposition announced at the outset is fully articulated—those who hate Israel hate God, those who are enemies of Israel are enemies of God, those who help Israel help God—and then systematically instantiated by facts set forth in Scripture.

In line with its focus upon issues of intentionality, the Halakhah insists that, just as gentiles make choices willfully, so in dealing with idolatry and the gentiles, Israel too

may exercise its own will. Under all conditions, the Halakhah assumes, Israelites possess freedom of will: they are always Man, "in our image." The Halakhah presupposes not gentile hegemony but only gentile power. It further takes for granted that Israelites may make choices, may specifically refrain from trading in what gentiles value in the service of their gods, and may hold back from gentiles what gentiles require for that service. Israelites may live in a world governed by gentiles, but they form intentions and carry them out. They may decide what to sell and what not to sell, whom to hire for what particular act of labor and to whom not to sell their own labor, and, above all, Israelite traders may determine to give up opportunities denied them by the circumstance of gentile idolatry.

The Halakhah therefore makes a formidable statement of Israel's freedom to make choices, its opportunity within the context of everyday life to preserve a territory free of idolatrous contamination, must as Israel in entering the Land was to create a territory free of the worship of idols and their presence. In the setting of world order Israel may find itself subject to the will of others, but in the house of Israel, Israelites can and should establish a realm for God's rule and presence, free of idolatry. And if to establish a domain for God, Israelites must practice self-abnegation, refrain from actions of considerable weight and consequence, well, much of the Torah concerns itself with what people are not supposed to do, and God's rule comes to realization in acts of restraint. So much for the life of Israel under the commandments.

The Halakhah, to be sure, recognizes that gentiles too are subject to God's commandments. There are seven such religious obligations that apply to the children of Noah. It is not surprising—indeed, it is predictable—that the definition of the matter should find its place in the Halakhah of Abodah Zarah (T. A.Z. 8:4–6):

> T. 8:4 A. Concerning seven religious requirements were the children of Noah admonished:
> B. setting up courts of justice, idolatry, blasphemy [cursing the Name of God], fornication, bloodshed, and thievery.

As in the case of Israelites, so the death penalty applies to a Noahide, so B. San. 7:5 I.4–5/57a: On account of violating three religious duties are children of Noah put to death: on account of adultery, murder, and blasphemy.'" R. Huna, R. Judah, and all the disciples of Rab say, "On account of seven commandments a son of Noah is put to death. The All-Merciful revealed that fact of one of them, and the same rule applies to all of them. But just as Israelites, educated in the Torah, are assumed to exhibit certain uniform virtues, e.g., forbearance, so gentiles, lacking that same education, are assumed to conform to a different model. The Halakhah constructs, indeed defines, the interiority of an Israel sustaining God's service in a world of idolatry: life against death in the two concrete and tangible dimensions by which life is sustained: trade and the production of food, the foci of the Halakhah. No wonder Israel must refrain from engaging with idolatry on days of the festivals for idols that the great fairs embody—then especially. So much for the visible enemies of Eden: animate corpses.

The key to the system presents itself in its account of the outsider. The politics of Judaism is a politics of life against death: forming God's kingdom in particular, yielding life eternal. The entire politics comes to expression in this language, cited earlier (M. San. 10:1):

> All Israelites have a share in the world to come, as it is said, "Your people also shall be all righteous, they shall inherit the land forever; the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified" (Is. 60:21).

JACOB NEUSNER

Politics, Judaism and, I: The Normative Statement in Scripture and the Talmud

The political theory of Judaism emerges in the Hebrew Scriptures of ancient Israel as these writings are interpreted by the rabbis of the first six centuries C.E. in the Talmud of Babylonia and related documents. The Pentateuch portrays Israel as "a kingdom of priests and a holy people" and further takes for granted that this "kingdom" or "people" forms a political entity, exercising legitimate violence. Scripture therefore understands Israel not merely as a church or a voluntary community but an empowered society, with a government, laws, and institutions. Scripture's own portrait of the type of government varies. The Pentateuch read whole takes for granted that Israel is governed by God through the prophet Moses. Moses further appoints an administration to deal with conflict and to secure the public order, and that administration exercises authority and inflicts the death penalty for civil and religious infractions. Other writings describe an Israelite monarchy; still others, a government by the priesthood based on the Temple in Jerusalem. The picture of Israel as a family, descended from Abraham and Sarah, conflicts with this account of Israel as an empowered and political entity. That picture plays no role in the articulation of the politics of the holy people.

However Scripture portrays matters, the politics of Judaism are shaped in the legal documents of late antiquity, which take over and recast Scripture's account. The Mishnah, ca. 200 C.E., a philosophical law code that portrays a utopian Israel in the manner of Plato's Republic or Aristotle's Ethics, with its commentaries in the Talmud of the Land of Israel, ca. 400 C.E., and the Talmud of Babylonia, ca. 600 C.E., carries forward the premise of Scripture that the holy people forms a political entity in the here and now, not merely a supernatural community of the faithful, such as is the conception of Israel in the Dead Sea library. The Mishnah's Judaism speaks of a social entity treated as a political one as well, of "Israel" classified as a state. This social entity (called, as the social entity of every Judaism is called, "Israel") is not merely a mythic and theological picture but also a political structure.

When people would speak of "the state of (being) Israel," therefore, they would also refer to "the State of Israel," the Jewish State, understanding that they spoke of a political entity like other such political entities. Accordingly this Judaism became in mind and imagination a state not only of (autonomous) being but also of (shared and social) doing, not alone of ontology but of society. That is why this Judaism defines a locus for inquiry into more than theological science, but into, especially, the social sciences as well: economics, politics, and philosophy. The key generative problematic of the Mishnah is the interplay of divine will and the human will, and the relationships that require political scrutiny are between God and Israel, not among citizens or between the state and its citizens. Religion and politics are integrated.

The encompassing framework of rules, institutions, and sanctions is explained and validated by appeal to the myth of God's shared rule. That dominion, exercised by God and his surrogates on earth, is focused partly in the royal palace, partly in the Temple, and partly in the court. The political myth of Judaism explains who exercises legitimate violence and under what conditions and furthermore specifies the source for differentiation. Indeed, the Judaic political myth comes to expression in its details of differentiation, which permit us to identify, and of course to answer, the generative question of politics: who has power, whence does that power derive, and how may they use that power to commit legitimate violence? Analyzing myth by explaining sanctions draws our attention to the modes of legitimate violence that the system identifies.

Here we find four types of sanctions, each deriving from a distinct institution of political power, each bearing its own mythic

explanation. The first comprises what God and the heavenly court can do to people. The second comprises what the earthly court can do to people. That type of sanction embodies the legitimate application of the worldly and physical kinds of violence of which political theory ordinarily speaks. The third comprises what the cult can do to people. The cult through its requirements can deprive people of their property as legitimately as can a court. The fourth comprises conformity with consensus—self-imposed sanctions. Here the issue is, whose consensus and defined by whom? Across these four types of sanction, four types of coercion are in play. They depend on violence of various kinds—psychological and social as much as physical. Clearly, then, the sanctions that are exercised by other than judicial-political agencies prove violent and legitimately coercive, even though the violence and coercion are not the same as those carried out by courts.

Predictably, when we search for the mythic premises sanctions, we begin with God's place in the institutionalization and execution of legitimate violence. Of course, the repertoire of sanctions does encompass God's direct intervention, but that is hardly a preferred alternative or a common one. Still, God does commonly intervene when oaths are violated, for oaths are held to involve the person who invokes God's name and God. Further, whereas, when faced with an insufficiency of valid evidence, under strict rules of testimony, the earthly court cannot penalize serious crime, the heavenly court can and does impose a penalty. Clearly, then, God serves to justify the politics and account for its origin. Although God is never asked to join in making specific decisions effecting policy in the everyday politics of the state, deliberate violation of certain rules provokes God's or the heavenly court's direct intervention. Thus obedience to the law clearly represents submission to God in heaven. Further, forms of heavenly coercion suggest a complex mythic situation, with more subtle nuance than the claim that, overall, God rules would indicate. A politics of rules and regulations cannot admit God's *ad hoc* participation, and this system did not do so. God joined in the system in a regular and routine way, and the rules took for granted God's part in the politics of Judaism.

In the Mishnah's picture, some of the same crimes or sins for which the heavenly court imposes the penalty of extirpation—death at the hands of the divine—are those that, under appropriate circumstances (e.g., sufficient evidence admissible in court) the earthly court imposes the death-penalty. That is, the heavenly court and the earthly court impose precisely the same sanctions for the same crimes or sins. The earthly court therefore forms down here the exact replica and counterpart, within a single system of power, of the heavenly court up there.

The earthly and heavenly courts share jurisdiction over sexual crimes and over serious religious crimes against God. The heavenly court penalizes with its form of the death-penalty religious sins against God, in which instances a person deliberately violates the taboos of sanctification. This fact calls our attention to a third partner in the distribution and application of power, the Temple with its system of sanctions that cover precisely the same acts subject to the jurisdiction of the heavenly and earthly courts. Heaven's counterpart on earth is now not the earthly court but the Temple. This is the institution that, in theory, automatically receives the appropriate offering from the person who inadvertently violates these same taboos of sanctification.

But this is an odd choice for the Mishnah, since in its authors time no Temple stood on earth. The juxtaposition of courts and Temple thus suggests that both are equally matters of theory. In the theory at hand, then, the earthly court, for its part, penalizes social crimes against the community that the heavenly court, on the one side, and the Temple rites, on the other, do not take into account at all. These are murder, apostasy, kidnapping, public defiance of the court, and false prophecy. The earthly court further imposes sanctions on matters of particular concern to the heavenly court, with special reference to taboos of sanctification (e.g., negative commandments). These three institutions, therefore, exercise concrete and material power, utilizing legitimate violence

to kill someone, exacting penalties against property, and inflicting pain. The sages' modes of power, by contrast, stand quite apart, apply mainly to their own circle, and work through the in-tangible though no less effective means of inflicting shame or paying honor.

Power flows through three distinct but intersecting dominions, each with its own concern, all sharing some interests in common. The heavenly court attends to deliberate defiance of heaven, the Temple to inadvertent defiance of heaven. The earthly court attends to matters subject to its jurisdiction by reason of sufficient evidence, proper witnesses, and the like, and these same matters come under heavenly jurisdiction when the earthly court is unable to act. Accordingly, we have a tripartite system of sanctions: heaven cooperating with the Temple in some matters, with the court in others, and, as noted, each bearing its own distinct media of enforcing the law as well. What, then, can we say concerning the systemic myth of politics? The forms of power and the modes of mediating legitimate violence draw our attention to a single political myth. The unity of that myth is underlined by the simple fact that the earthly court enters into the process right along side the heavenly court and the Temple. So a single myth must serve all three correlated institutions.

The myth of God's authority infuses the institutions of heaven and earth alike, an authority diffused among three principle foci or circles of power, heaven's court, the earthly court, and the Temple in-between. Each focus of power has its own jurisdiction and responsibility, heaven above, earth beneath, the Temple in the position of mediation, transmitting as it does from earth to heaven the penalties handed over as required. And all media of power in the matter of sanctions intersect at some points as well: a tripartite politics, a single myth drawing each component into relationship with a single source and origin of power, God's law set forth in the Torah. The point of differentiation within the political structures, supernatural and natural alike, lies in the attitude and intention of a human being. We differentiate among the applications of power by reference to the attitude of the person who comes into relationship with that power. A person who comes into conflict with the system, rejecting the authority claimed by the powers that be, does so deliberately or inadvertently. The myth accounts in the end for the following hierarchization of action and penalty, infraction and sanction: [1] If the deed is deliberate, then one set of institutions exercises jurisdiction and utilizes supernatural power. [2] If the deed is inadvertent, another institution exercises jurisdiction and utilizes the power made available by that same supernatural being.

A sinner or criminal who has deliberately violated the law has by his or her action challenged the politics of Judaism. Consequently, God or God's surrogate imposes sanctions—extirpation (by the court on high), or death or other appropriate penalty (by the court on earth). A sinner or criminal who has inadvertently violated the law is penalized by the imposition of Temple sanctions—lose of valued goods. People obey because God wants them to and has told them what to do, and when they do not obey, a differentiated political structure appeals to that single hierarchizing myth. The components of the myth are two: first, God's will, expressed in the law of the Torah, second, the human being's will, carried out in obedience to the law of the Torah or in defiance of that law. The political myth of Judaism has to explain the differentiation of sins or crimes, with their associated penalties or punishments, and so sanctions of power. And in Scripture there is a very precise answer to the question of how to differentiate among sins or crimes and why to do so. Given the position of the system of the Mishnah, the point of differentiation must rest with one's attitude or intentionality.

We have a well-known story of how the power of God conflicts with the power of humanity so as to invoke penalties and sanctions in precisely the differentiated modes we have before us. That story of power differentiated by the will of the human being in communion or conflict with the word of the commanding God comes to us from the Garden of Eden (Gen. 2:1ff.), where what was at stake was responsibility: not only

who has violated God's commandment, but who bears responsibility for deliberately violating the law. Here the ultimate responsibility lies with the snake, because it acted deliberately, not under constraint or on account of deception or misinformation, as did Adam and Eve. The sanction applies most severely to the one who by intention and an act of will violated God's intention and will.

The political myth of Judaism now emerges in the Mishnah in all of its detail as a reprise—in consequential and necessary, stunning detail—of the story of God's commandment, humanity's disobedience, God's sanction for the sin or crime, and humanity's atonement and reconciliation. The Mishnah omits all explicit reference to myths that explain power and sanctions but invokes in its rich corpus of details the absolute given of the story of the distinction between what is deliberate and what is mitigated by an attitude that is not culpable, a distinction set forth in the tragedy of Adam and Eve, in the failure of Moses and Aaron, and in countless other passages in the Pentateuch, Prophetic Books, and Writings. The Mishnah's is a politics of life after Eden and outside of Eden. The upshot of the matter is that the political myth of Judaism sets forth the constraints of freedom, the human will brought to full and unfettered expression, imposed by the constraints of revelation, God's will made known.

Since the freedom of humanity to make decisions and frame intentions forms the point of differentiation among the political media of power, we are required to return to the paradigmatic exercise of that same freedom, that is, to Eden, to the moment when Adam and Eve exercise their own will and defy God. Since the operative criterion in the differentiation of sanction—that is, the exercise of legitimate violence by heaven, earth, or the Temple—is the human attitude and intention in carrying out a culpable action, we must recognize that the politics before us rehearses the myth of Adam and Eve in Eden—it finds its dynamic in the correspondence between God's will and humanity's freedom to act however it chooses, thus freely incurring the risk of penalty or sanction for the wrong exercise of freedom.

At stake is what Adam and Eve and numerous others intend, propose, plan, for that is the point at which the politics intervenes, making its points of differentiation between and among its sanctions and the authorities that impose those penalties. For that power to explain difference, which is to say, the capacity to represent and account for hierarchy, we are required to turn to the story of the fall of Adam and Eve from Eden and to counterpart stories. The reason is that the political myth derives from that myth of origins its points of differentiation, and it explains by reference to the principal components of that myth—God's and humanity's will and power—the dynamics of the political system at hand. God commands, but humanity does what it chooses, and in the interplay of those two protean forces, each power in its own right, the sanctions and penalties of the system apply. Power comes from two conflicting forces, the commanding will of God and the free will of the human being. Power expressed in immediate sanctions is also mediated through these same forces, heaven above, human beings below, with the Temple mediating between the two. Power works its way in the interplay between what God has set forth in the law of the Torah and what human beings do, whether intentionally, whether inadvertently, whether obediently, whether defiantly. That is why the politics of Judaism is a politics of Eden.

To examine the politics of the Mishnah in its historical context, we must recall that, among prior Judaisms, only the scriptural system had set forth a politics at all. The appeal to politics in setting forth a theory of the social order of their particular "Israel" will have provoked some curiosity among, for one example, the framers of the Judaism portrayed by the Essene library uncovered at Qumran, and, for another, the framers of the Christianity of the land of Israel in the first century. Both groups, heirs of the ancient Scriptures as much as were the framers of the Mishnah, found in politics no important component of the systemic structure they set forth. By contrast, the

integration, within a systematic account of the social order, of a politics will not have surprised the great figures of Greco-Roman philosophy, Plato and Aristotle for example. That fact takes on consequence when we note that the Pentateuch simply does not prepare us to make sense of the institutions that the politics of Judaism for its part designs. The Pentateuchal politics invokes priest and prophet, Aaron and Moses, but knows nothing of a tripartite government involving king, priest, and sage; nor do the royal narratives concede empowerment to the priest or sage. On the other hand knowledge of Aristotle's Politics and Plato's Republic gives perspective upon the politics of the Mishnah.

The Pentateuch contributes nothing to the Mishnah's scheme of routine government by king, high priest, and sages' court. The Pentateuch's prophetic rule and constant appeal to God's immediate participation in the political process, and, in particular, in the administration of sanctions and acts of legitimate violence, by contrast, falls into the category of a politics of charisma. The difference is not merely that the Pentateuchal institutions appeal to prophet and priest; it also is a difference in how the structure works as a political system. For the Pentateuchal myth that serves to legitimate coercion—rule by God's prophet, in the model of Moses, governance through explicitly revealed laws that God has dictated for the occasion—plays no active and systemic role whatsoever in the formulation and presentation of the politics of Judaism. Philosophical systems use politics, by contrast, to set forth the rules and unchanging order of legitimate exercise of power, its teleology and its structure. Plato and Aristotle make no place for godly intervention on any particular occasion.

And for their part, among the types of political authority contained within the scriptural repertoire, the one that the Mishnah's philosophers reject is the prophetic and charismatic, and the one that they deem critical is the authority governing and governed by rules in an orderly, rational way. The principal political figures—king, high priest, the disciple of the sage—are carefully nurtured through learning of rules, not through cultivation of gifts of the spirit. The authority of sages in the politics of Judaism in particular does not derive from charisma, e.g., revelation by God to the sage who makes a ruling in a given case, or even general access to God for the sage. So the politics of the Pentateuch—structure and system alike—in no way forms the model for the politics of the Mishnah.

The Politics of the Talmud

The next and definitive politics emerged in the interpretation of the Mishnah by the Talmud. There, in the Talmud of the Land of Israel, we find a politics that exhibits none of the traits of the Mishnah's politics, but sets forth those of its own. Where the Mishnah's politics is orderly and hierarchical, the Yerushalmi's scarcely effects differentiation within the Israelite sphere at all; it has one political entity and class, not three on earth, corresponding to the one in heaven. The Talmud of the Land of Israel and related writings portray not the (imagined) orderly and inner-facing politics of Israel living by themselves under God, king, priest, and sage, but the palpable chaos of Jews living among gentiles, governed by a diversity of authorities, lacking all order and arrangement. The politics of the Mishnah is classified with that of philosophers, in abstract terms thinking about logic and order. The politics of the successor-documents shows us politicians deeply involved in the administration of the concrete social group, describing its "Israel" as a real-life community. The later authorships, in the fourth and fifth centuries, prove analogous not to philosophers but to men of affairs, judges, lawyers, bureaucrats, heads of local governments.

True, both the Mishnah's and the successor-documents' politics in the end put sages in charge of everything. But in the first system sages formed one component of a well-ordered structure, in which monarchy, priesthood, and clerkdom formed a cogent structure and together, each doing its assigned task, administered an orderly

world in an orderly way. In the second, sages are represented as the sole legitimate authority, competing to be sure with such illegitimate authorities as the patriarch within and the gentile government of Rome beyond. The practical politics then dealt with Jews who lived under both rabbis near at hand, settling everyday disputes of streets and households, and also distant archons of a nameless state, to be manipulated and placated on earth as in heaven. But the Yerushalmi's portrait of legitimate power, as distinct from illegitimate violence, appeals then to the legitimation of the Torah serving solely for the sages, while the Mishnah's account differs in ways now entirely obvious. While legitimate power is carefully parceled out, illegitimate power is ignored. In the Yerushalmi's politics, by contrast, the issue is the distinction between illegitimate power, worked by patriarch within and Rome beyond, and legitimate power, focused solely upon sages. The issues thus shift even while the category remains the same. That shift indicates a decay in categorical cogency; the Mishnah's category of politics is preserved but then bypassed as issues not formerly considered intervene and drastically revise the character of the whole—even in its initial context and definition.

The Mishnah's politics breathes the pure air of public piazza and stoa, the politics of the Talmud of the Land of Israel and its associated Midrash-compilations, the ripe stench of private alleyway and courtyard. That is why the comparison of the Mishnah's politics with philosophical politics, the Yerushalmi's with an other-than-philosophical politics is amply justified. The image of the Mishnah's politics is evoked by the majestic Parthenon, perfect in all its proportions, conceived in a single moment of pure rationality. The successor-system is a scarcely-choate cathedral in process, the labor of many generations, each of its parts the conception of diverse moments of devotion, all of them the culmination of an ongoing and evolving process of revelation in the here and now. The Mishnah's system presents a counterpart to Plato's Republic and Aristotle's Politics, a noble theory of it all. In literary terms, in the transition from the Mishnah to the successor-writings we leave behind the strict and formal classicism of the Mishnah, like Plato's Republic describing for no one in particular an ideal society never, in its day, to be seen. We come, rather, to focus upon the disorderly detail of the workaday world, to be sure taking the utopian Mishnah along with us in our descent into the streets where people really do commit acts of violence against one another, and where authority really does have to sort out legitimate acts and on-going institutions able to perform such acts from illegitimate ones.

While, therefore, the politics of the Yerushalmi and related writings carries forward that of the Mishnah, a quite separate conception of political institutions and relationships also comes to expression. It is a political structure in which sages administer sanctions, a system in which sages make decisions; where others intervene, their sanctions—whether those of the patriarch or of the gentile—are illegitimate. Legitimate violence is executed solely by one political entity, which is the sages' court.

This draws our attention to the question of the sanctions legitimately in the hands of sages alone. These are differentiated not in principle but only in context: what works. And the differentiation is circumstantial, expressed through description of cases, never theoretical and principled. But there should be no doubt that violence, not merely voluntary acquiescence, is at stake. Sages' power is political, not merely moral, routine and not charismatic in any sense. Thus sages are portrayed by the Talmud of the Land of Israel as exercising authority effected through concrete sanctions not only over their own circles, people who agreed with them, but over the Jewish community at large.

This authority was practical and involved very specific powers. The first and most important sort of power a rabbi under some circumstances and in some cases maintained he could exercise was to sort out and adjudicate rights to property and personal status affecting property. The rabbi is described as able to take chattels or real estate from one party and to give them into the rightful ownership of some other. The second power rabbis are supposed to have wielded was to tell people what to do, or not to do,

in matters not involving property rights. They could administer floggings, that is, violence in its most personal form. The Talmud alleges that rabbis could tell people outside the circles of their own disciples and estate how to conduct themselves. A rabbi is presented as able to coerce someone to do what that ordinary Jew might otherwise not wish to do or to prevent him from doing what he wanted. That other authorities existed, and even competed with rabbinical authorities, is taken for granted. What is important is that the Yerushalmi portrays legitimate violence in a manner quite asymmetrical with the pattern set forth in the Mishnah.

The Talmud of the Land of Israel takes for granted that rabbis could define the status of persons in such ways as to affect property and marital rights and standing. It is difficult to imagine a more effective form of social authority. The Talmud treats as settled fact a range of precedents out of which the law is defined. In those precedents, rabbis declare a woman married or free to marry; permitted as wife of a priest to eat food in the status of leave-offering or prohibited from doing so; enjoying the support of a husband's estate or left without that support; having the right to collect a previously contracted marriage settlement or lacking that right. In all of these ways, as much as in their control of real estate, commercial, and other material and property transactions among Jews, the rabbis held they governed the Jewish community as effective political authorities. Whatever beliefs or values they proposed to instill in the people or realize in the collective life of the community, they effected not through moral suasion or pretense of magical power. It was not hocus pocus but political power resting on the force of government authority. They could tell people what to do and force them to do it.

The Talmud of the Land of Israel is remarkably reticent about the basis for rabbis' power over the Jews' political institutions: who bestowed this-worldly legitimacy and supplied the force? But the systematic provision of biblical proof texts for Mishnaic laws presents an ample myth for the law and its enforcement: sages acted by right of their mastery of the Torah and therefore in the status of heaven. Given by God to Moses at Sinai, the law of the Torah, including the Mishnah's laws, represents the will of heaven. But with all the faith in the world, on the basis of such an assertion about God's will, the losing party to a litigation over a piece of real estate will surely have surrendered his property to the other side only with the gravest reservations—if at all. He more likely will have complained to some other authority, if he could. Short of direct divine coercion, upon which a legal system cannot be expected to rely, there had to be more reliable means of making the system work.

What these were, however, the Talmud of the Land of Israel hardly tells us. That silence underlines the political theory of the document: the sage now acts for heaven, in the way in which, in the Mishnah's politics, the king, high priest, and sage represented on earth a counterpart power and activity to the power and activity of God. Then each party, on earth as in heaven, carried out its assigned and proper task. Now, it seems clear, the sage is the sole focus of legitimate authority on earth, and heaven's rule is no more explicit than the role of the king (or high priest) is legitimate. The differentiated foci of the Mishnah's philosophical politics give way to the unitary focus of the Yerushalmi's theory of the same matter. What is clear is that politics, in theory, in the Mishnah represents a diffusion of power within an articulated order and hierarchy; the focus of power is no longer cogent but multiple and incoherent; but legitimacy, by contrast, is now single and singular, and therein lies the shift.

The Talmud of the Land of Israel therefore is clear that rabbis competed with other authorities for rule over the Jewish community. But sages alone exercised power legitimately; all other political institutions by definition were illegitimate. True, the relationship of the rabbis as judges and administrators to other Jewish community judges and administrators who may have carried out the same tasks and exercised the same responsibilities in regard to the Jewish nation of the land of Israel is not clarified either in cases or as to theory. But

here too the silence is indicative: it is a tacit judgment, and a devastating, eloquent one. The Talmud's picture of legitimate violence comes to concrete expression in its account of what rabbis could force people to do because of their political power and position. The sovereignty of rabbinical courts in property disputes derived from the power of the courts not only to persuade or elicit general support but also to call upon the power of the state to transfer ownership of real and movable property from one party to another. In medieval and modern times, the emergence, out of Scripture, the Mishnah, and the Talmuds, of a politics administered by rabbis—portrayed as both holy men and sages—would carry forward the model adumbrated here.

JACOB NEUSNER

Politics, Judaism and, II: in Medieval and Modern Times

THE Jewish people and its religious and political traditions span at least 3300 years, perhaps 500 more. During this period, Jews have comprised a tribal polity, an enslaved caste, a simple agrarian republic, a state that was also a regional power, a community in exile, an imperial province, a vassal state, a revolutionary polity, a congeries of dispersed communities bound together by a common law, a set of co-religionists, an ethnic group, and, today, a modern state. While each of these configurations has had its own uniqueness, certain threads have run through every one of them, dating back to the earliest days of Jewish existence.

From its very roots, Judaism has been a theo-political phenomenon. According to Jewish tradition, God called upon Abraham to establish a new family in a new country. Within that land, this family would expand into a group of tribes and then a people with its own polity, shaped by God's communications given directly to their leaders and them. The Bible is a theo-political book, for it provides the foundations for the relationship between Judaism and politics and describes four different regimes of government: the patriarchal (Genesis), a tribal federal republic (Exodus through Judges, Ruth), a federal monarchy (Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, the prophetic books), and a restored republic (Ezra, Nehemiah), at times referred to as a nomocracy. Each of these regimes emerged as a response to a particular situation that confronted the Jewish people at a particular time. Each had to maintain the set of relationships set forth in the Bible, which we know as the fundaments of Judaism. Indeed, the political thought of Judaism begins in the presentation of a proper set of relationships required by God that the people can then shape into appropriate regimes, depending upon conditions at the time.

In the first centuries C.E., under the rabbis, Judaism's biblical foundations were modified through a system of law that constructed a complete yet evolving legal context for the relationship between the people and God, on the one hand, and the people and each other, the land, and other nations, on the other. As in the case of the biblical foundations, through the legal process, for approximately two millennia, Rabbinic Judaism maintained and even strengthened the close intertwining between Judaism and politics. Rabbinic Judaism served at least four different regimes in the diaspora and in Israel under diaspora conditions: patriarchate and Sanhedrin in Roman Palestine, exilarch and yeshivot and their variations in Babylonia and the Middle East, the Kehillah—holy community—and (con)federations of communities in Europe from Spain to Russia.

Only with the coming of the modern era was an element of separation introduced between Judaism and politics, especially from the latter years of the eighteenth century onward. Judaism was redefined in sacral and ritual terms as a "religion" in the Christian sense, while responsibility for the political

needs of the Jews as a people was transferred to civil, essentially secular, institutions. This separation reached its apogee at the end of the nineteenth century, when, in community after community as well as world-wide, a formal institutional separation was made between "religious" and "political."

Yet even in modern times, when efforts at separation have been at their greatest, it remains essentially impossible to separate the Jews as a people from Judaism as a religion. Being Jewish is conventionally and properly recognized both as being a part of the Jewish people—regardless of one's other political loyalties—and being identified with the Jewish religion—regardless of the degree of one's religious belief or practice. Efforts to treat the two as separate continue to be overwhelmingly rejected by the vast majority of Jews, who thus deny the validity of the enterprises of those who have tried to define a totally secular Jewishness, or who, for instance, imagine that it is possible to be Jewish while accepting the religious claims of Christianity ("Messianic Jews," "Jews for Jesus"). While modern Jews have been preoccupied with the discussion of the relationship between peoplehood and religion, they share the idea that the two are intertwined in some way.

Kinship and Consent

Just as Jews as a people and Judaism as a religion have always gone hand and hand, so was the Jewish people formed and continues to exist as an amalgam of kinship and consent. Jews are Jews by virtue of their common descent (converts to Judaism are traditionally considered to have acquired that kinship through their conversion, which is why they are traditionally given the names of Abraham and Sarah as their immediate forbears). At the same time being Jewish is also a matter of consenting to live according to the Sinai covenant and the system of norms and law that flows from it, the consent that every individual Jew must affirm and reaffirm. In essence, kinship leads to Jewish peoplehood and ethnicity, while consent underlies the Jews' Judaism. Both are considered critically necessary, and Jewish religion is rooted in both.

The contrary view, that Judaism can stand apart from Jewish peoplehood, was first advanced in Western Europe as a strategy to achieve Jewish emancipation from the ghettoization imposed by the majority Christian society. This became especially necessary as modernity brought down the medieval divisions in the general society and as Jewish communities lost their autonomy as well. Most Jews did not want to be left out of the new opportunities that the emergence of the nation-state, which recognized individual citizens only, in theory without regard to other divisions, offered.

Hence, except for those who remained strictly Orthodox and wished to continue to live in self-contained communities, the Jews sought integration into the new nation-states. They could do so only if they emphasized Judaism as a religious identity rather than Jewishness as a national one. This approach worked only partially and was defeated by the rise of modern antisemitism. In the end, the Jews could survive as a group only by recognizing their corporate character to at least some degree.

While Zionism emphasized Jewish nationhood to its fullest, it still made the concession to modernity of separating this nationalism from religion. But this too was a first time venture, and, for the same reasons, yielded mixed results. Just as Judaism rested and rests on Jewish peoplehood, so, too, as even those thoughtful Israelis who thought otherwise are beginning to find, does Jewish peoplehood rest on Judaism. Neither can maintain itself without the other. No matter how one chooses to view it, this is fundamental: neat divisions between ethnicity, culture, and religion have proved impossible to maintain in Jewish life, past or present.

The crises of the past few years have generated renewed interest on the part of Jewish publics in Israel and the diaspora in the character of the state of Israel as a Jewish state and in the Jewish people as a corporate entity. As a consequence, the modern Jewish search for roots and meaning has been intensified. In the twentieth century, the most practical aspects of this search have involved the restoration of Jewish political

independence through the state of Israel and the revival of the sense of Jewish peoplehood based on religious affiliation throughout the diaspora. Precisely because large numbers of contemporary Jews have moved increasingly towards self-definition in terms that must be considered political, a significant part of the contemporary Jewish search for roots and meaning must take place within the political as well as the religious realm.

Biblical Foundations of the Jewish Political Tradition

The Bible provides the enduring foundations of the Jewish political tradition. In one sense, this is because the foundations of all of Jewish tradition are found there. In many respects, however, the Jewish political tradition has been even more enduringly influenced by the Bible than other aspects of Judaism. Notably, the effort of the sages to diminish the biblical political tradition in the wake of the disastrous Roman wars meant that the tradition was transformed by them into an undifferentiated part of the halakhic tradition, so much so that with the revival of explicit political inquiry in the Middle Ages, Jewish thinkers and leaders who otherwise relied exclusively on the Talmud went back to biblical sources for ideas on proper political behavior and institution building. Centuries later, we find an echo of that process in the way that Zionists sought to base on biblical sources their quest for renewed Jewish statehood in the land of Israel.

Perhaps most compelling about the Jewish political tradition is that Jews continue in no small measure to function on its basis in the political arena, albeit usually without conscious awareness that they are working within a living tradition of their own or any tradition at all. The striking similarities in the structure of Jewish institutions in Israel and the diaspora, present and past, the continuities in the basic characteristics of Jewish political behavior, the persistence of certain fundamental beliefs and practices embedded in Jewish political culture, all attest to the persistence of a Jewish political tradition even if it remains for the most part unrecognized.

Covenant and the Jewish Political Tradition

Like every political tradition, the Jews' is concerned with power and justice. But, as a product of Judaism, it differs from the political traditions growing out of classical Greek thought in that it begins with a concern for relationships rather than regimes. It is less concerned with determining the best form of government (in Aristotelian terms, the best constitution) than with establishing the proper relationship between the governors and the governed, power and justice, God and humanity. This concern for relationships is embodied in the principle of covenant that lies at the root of the Jewish political tradition and that gives the tradition its form. In the Jewish political tradition, as in Jewish tradition as a whole, all relationships are rooted in the covenant between Israel and God.

The concept of covenant is deceptively simple. The Hebrew term *brit* conveys the sense of a morally grounded perpetual (or at least indeterminate) compact between parties having independent but not necessarily equal status. The covenant establishes certain mutual obligations and a commitment to undertake joint action to achieve defined ends, which may be limited or comprehensive, under conditions of mutual respect and in such a way as to protect the fundamental integrity of all parties involved. A covenant is much more than a contract—though our modern system of contracts is related to the covenant idea—because it involves a pledge of loyalty and a morally grounded obligation beyond that demanded for mutual advantage, often involving the development of community among the partners. It is also more than a compact in that it involves God as either a party or as a witness and guarantor. In its fullest sense, a covenant thus creates a holy or divinely sanctioned partnership community, based upon a firm, legally defined relationship

delineating the authority, power, and integrity of each of the partners but requiring more than a narrow legalistic approach to make the community a real one.

This covenant idea is of great importance because of how it builds relationships. The Bible develops a whole system of relationships based upon covenants, beginning with the covenants between God and humankind, which create the conditions under which regimes can be constituted. The Sinai covenant, for example, transformed the Jewish people from a family of tribes into a body politic that could develop its constitution and regime. Exod. 18–20, which describes the Sinai experience, provides us with a clear picture of this process. On one hand, it describes the covenant that institutionalizes the fundamental relationship between God and Israel, establishing the new body politic over which God assumes direct rule. On the other hand, the actual institutions of the regime are portrayed as coming from distinctly non-divine, even non-Jewish, sources, partly from the inherited tradition of tribal government and partly from Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, who suggests the way to structure the judicial branch of the national government.

The fact that these stories are intertwined and placed parallel to one another is of the utmost significance. It suggests that the political basis for the constitution is the covenant, which is more than a social compact. But the covenant does not dictate or establish the form of the regime. Rather, the form of the regime is taken from human sources on the basis of necessity and convenience. This is the pattern of interaction between covenant and regime throughout Jewish history. On the one hand, we find the continuity of the fundamental covenant and the constitution that flows from it, the Torah. On the other hand, within the latitude established by the Torah, Jews are free to adopt the form of regime they wish.

The interaction between the two elements is ongoing. The model of this post-Sinai interaction is found in Joshua 24, where a covenanting act takes place to confirm the reorganization of the tribal confederacy after the conquest of the land. Subsequent Jewish historical experience brought with it a variety of adaptations of covenantal principles, with a new one for each new era of Jewish political adjustment.

In its classical form, the Jewish polity is an *edah*—an assembly or congregation, a coming together, perhaps best understood as the Hebrew equivalent of a commonwealth—constituted by God and Israel through the Sinai covenant. The powers of this polity traditionally were shared by God, the people of Israel in their character as an *edah*, and those designated as governors by both (e.g., David, who is anointed by Samuel in God's name but whose rule is confirmed only after he enters into covenants with the tribal elders of Judah and Israel). The powers are further divided among several domains: the magistrates (Moses, Joshua, the judges, the kings), the prophets, and the priests.

The result of all this is a separation of powers, not in the modern sense of executive, legislative, and judicial (although the Bible is cognizant of those three basic divisions, cf., Is. 33:22—"For the Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our Lawgiver, the Lord is our King; He will save us"), but as an intricate set of power relationships among separate yet linked bodies that must work together for the good of both the religious and political dimensions of Jewish life. In several ways, the Jewish liturgy reflects this intricate set of relationships covering both religious and political matters: in the daily morning service where the heavenly hosts grant (or acknowledge) each other's authority to praise God and in the blessing after meals when the leader requests authority to take the lead from the others at the table (and, in the Sephardic ritual, from heaven as well), to name but two examples.

Perhaps the best example of all is found in the mode of delivery of the priestly blessing in prayer services of Sephardic Jews. Under Jewish law, those descended from the priestly families are required by God to administer the blessing; this is a purely ministerial task in which they have no discretion. When they are called upon to perform this task in the synagogue, a nonpriest (an "Israelite") calls them to it; they respond by asking for *reshut* (authority) from

the congregation, which, in turn, indicates that the authority is really granted by heaven. The one who called upon them then leads them in the blessing word by word. The script is as follows:

Israelite:	Cohanim (priests)!
Priests:	*B'reshut rabbotai* (By the authority of the congregation)!
Congregation:	*B'reshut shamayim* (By the authority of heaven)!
Israelite:	*Y'varechacha* (May you be blessed). . . .
Priests:	*Y'varechacha*. . . .

This pattern of interlocking authorities is paradigmatic of the Jewish polity; no single person or body has final authority; instead various bodies share powers.

It is in this original sense that the Jewish political tradition is federal (from the Latin *foedus*, meaning "covenant") in orientation. Fundamentally, federalism involves the coming together of separate elements to compound a common entity in such a way that their respective integrities are preserved. Appropriately, federal arrangements emphasize relationships as the key to proper structures of a lasting character. For that reason, the variety of structures animated by the federal principles is substantial. Jewish history attests to that variety, since the Jewish political tradition has emphasized federal arrangements in the more conventional sense of the term as well. There has hardly been an age in which the Jewish *edah* has not been organized on a federal basis, beginning with the tribal confederacy and including the federated kingdom of the tribes; the *politeuma* of the Hellenistic diaspora, which stood in federal relationship to the city in which it was located as well as to the rest of *Knesset Yisrael* (the Hebrew equivalent of *Kenishtay*, the Arab translation of *Edah*); the *yeshivot* of Babylonia and their respective communities; the medieval federations of communities, the Council of the Four Lands; the post-emancipation European federations of *cultesge-meinden*; the Latin American federations of country-of-origin communities; and the contemporary North American federations of Jewish functional agencies. And this is not an exhaustive list by any means.

The Jewish political tradition is republican in the original sense of the term—the body politic is held to be a *res publica*, a public thing, and not anyone's private preserve. Significantly, the Jewish political tradition in its classical expression has no idea of the state as a reified entity—that would be challenging God, from a religious point of view, idolating; there are only the varieties of political relationships that create polity. Indeed, the Jewish political tradition does not recognize state sovereignty as such: no state—a human creation—can be sovereign. Classically, only God is sovereign, and God entrusts the exercise of sovereign powers mediated through the Torah-as-constitution to the people as a whole, the magistrates, priests, and prophets or sages as provided in God's covenant with Israel.

In the last analysis, the Jewish political tradition is based upon what S.D. Goitein has termed "religious democracy," using the term religious in its original sense of "binding." At the same time, the Jewish political tradition has a strong aristocratic current, again not in the sense of aristocracy as a political structure but as a relationship whereby those who hold powers of government are trustees for both the people and the law, selected on the basis of some qualification—divine sanctification, scholarship, lineage or, de facto, wealth—the particular mix varying according to time and place.

Exploring the Jewish Political Tradition

The record of the Jewish political tradition is to be found in the Jewish people's sacred and subsidiary texts and in their collective behavior. It can even be argued that the survival of a committed Jewry, at least outside of the Orthodox camp, depends in no small measure on the Jewish political tradition. It is one of the ironies of the postmodern age that, just at the time when all Jews outside of Israel, some two-thirds of the world Jewish population, have lost all formal corporate political status, a new political focus of Jewish identification has suddenly reemerged.

The modern epoch—three hundred years from the middle of the seventeenth to the

middle of the twentieth centuries—found Jews shedding their corporate status and forms of corporate organization. In the process, they also shed the political links that were part and parcel of Jewish tradition and that held Jews together as one people, even in dispersion. On the intellectual plane, Jews tried to transform those links into theological-cum-ritual ("religious") links of various kinds and, on the practical plane, into social-cum-philanthropic ones.

Now, rather suddenly, these various links created by Jewish moderns as the source of Jewish identity and identification have begun to weaken for many Jews. In their place, ironically enough, both the political and spiritual have increasingly become the focal points of Jewish identity and interest. The first is clearly true in the state of Israel, and, particularly in the past decade, the last has been particularly true in the United States. A new political concern is also evident in the diaspora, where Jews are increasingly bound to one another only by formal associational ties that, while not of the old corporate kind, are political in the sense of reflecting such common interests as combating antisemitism, supporting Israel, and maintaining the Jewish right to be different.

As a result, the political dimension is rapidly emerging as a major unifying force that links virtually all Jews at a time at which secularization, assimilation, and movement away from tradition are rampant. Were Jews to derive their political ideas from philosophy (in the classical or technical sense of the term), perhaps it would be appropriate to talk about a Jewish political philosophy or competing Jewish political philosophies. This is the way of European civilization and, indeed, is characteristic of many peoples who have undergone a revolutionary break with their past that they must ground ideologically. However, Jews derive their framework from midrash and halakhah, not from philosophy, and are not dependent for their existence on ideology. Hence, they cannot rely upon philosophy to provide a grounding for Jewish political life. (Jews can philosophize, i.e., use the tools of philosophy, but only by grounding them in different set of assumptions, methods, and results.)

Significantly, the two great phenomena of twentieth-century Jewry, the reestablishment of a Jewish state in the land of Israel and the establishment of a great Jewish community in North America, represent interesting and important adaptations of the covenant idea. A look at the foundation of the early institutions and settlements of the new *yishuv* in Israel reveals that their basis in almost every case was covenantal. Borrowing from the established patterns of congregational *askamot*, Jews established their associations on the basis of formal compacts and constitutional documents often explicitly referred to as covenants. This continued to be the standard form of organization in the Jewish *yishuv* even after the British became the occupying power in the country. Until the emergence of the state in 1948, the *yishuv* was governed internally through a network of covenants and compacts.

In the United States, the organization of congregations follows the traditional form even though the congregations themselves may be untraditional in their religious practices. Similarly, the organization of social agencies and educational institutions and their coming together in local Jewish federations or countrywide confederations are simply extensions of what has been the standard pattern of Jewish organization for several millennia. One might be hard put to prove that, in either the Israeli or the American case, there was a conscious desire to maintain a particular political tradition. Rather, the shared political culture of Jews involved in situations that made its application feasible led to the new adaptation of the traditional pattern.

It is more than a little ironic that in the United States, where the government does not care how Jews organize themselves so long as they do not go beyond certain constitutional restrictions applicable to all Americans, the traditional covenantal pattern has expressed itself fully, whereas in Israel, where it was felt necessary to build authoritative state institutions on the model of the modern nation-state, this process has run into something of a dead end, stifled by the strong statist inclination toward centralized control of every aspect of public life brought from the European experiences of the state's molders and shapers. Nevertheless, by the

mid-1960s, a reaction against that statism arose and a reassertion of the demands of Jewish political culture emerged.

Humanity, Government, Politics

To understand these developments, we must comprehend the religious conceptual basis upon which Jewish political activity rests and the ends toward which it is directed. From the religious perspective, humans are partners with God, the Sovereign of the Universe (*Ribbon ha-Olam*), in the development and governance of the world, a partnership established by the covenant. Humans have both good and evil inclinations (*yetzer ha-tov* and *yetzer ha-ra*). Because of the inclination to evil, they require laws to guide them; and because they are more good than bad, their behavior can be improved by proper institutions. At the same time, people, when unrestrained, are capable of utilizing government and politics to institutionalize their evil inclinations, thereby greatly increasing their capability to do evil.

Government and politics are necessary parts of human existence, but, necessary and important as they are, they are not ends in themselves but merely tools for the achievement of more sacred goals. Politics is a universal and serious human activity but only as a means to achieve holy purposes (*tiqqun olam*—reform of the world). Since politics is part and parcel of the human way (*derekh ha-adam*), it is a mixture of the petty and the grand. Its importance must be recognized, but always with a certain ambivalence, given its propensities to serve excessive ambitions. In the last analysis, however, full achievement of the goals of political activity is dependent upon God's intervention to redeem (*geulah*) humanity. Hence it is necessary to look to a better future in the messianic age (*yemot ha-mashiah*).

Law and Justice

Law, in the sense of the divine constitutional teaching (the *Torah*), provides the foundation of the good human polity. Divine law is comprehensive and immutable, but properly constituted human agency has been granted broad powers of interpretation that, when used fully, are essentially legislative *de facto*. This strong commitment to constitutionalism and the rule of law tends to elevate judges to a position of special authority within the body politic. In its most narrow application, this commitment encourages hairsplitting legalism. On the other hand, it can be coupled with an equally strong operational commitment to the idea that all individuals must ultimately decide for themselves to what extent particular laws apply in their case, i.e., a kind of rule of law by repeated acts of consent. In certain ways, law is understood as a norm to be attained as much as a fixed rule or boundary.

Justice is intimately associated with divine law, but the association extends beyond a simple one-to-one relationship to involve practical considerations of covenant obligation (*hesed*) and mercy (*rahamim*). This often leads to a paradoxical condition whereby legal support for doing justice formally exacts the strongest penalties for unjust acts, which penalties are rarely if ever applied on grounds of tempering justice with mercy.

Political Authority and Obligation

The universe and its parts are under divine sovereignty (*malkhut shamayim*), and hence all human institutions possess only delegated authority and powers. That is the essence of Jewish theocracy. In fact, the good political order is a complex of interlocking authorities the legitimacy of which derives from the covenant-established partnership between God and humanity. In some cases the former elects and the latter ratifies; in others the process is reversed. But in every one, the two sides are somehow represented. This can lead to power-sharing at its best or, in extreme manifestations, to near-anarchy. Part of the theocratic character of the Jewish political tradition is reflected in a constant tension between the divine (*shamayim* or *theo*) and rule (*malkhut* or *cratos*), which must be reconciled by federal or covenantal linkage.

The basis for political authority is invariably covenantal, and political obligation flows from that covenantal base. Covenanting makes divine sovereignty concrete and human self-government possible in this world, but removal of the former can lead to the institutionalized expression of Faustian ambition on the part of humans.

The Polity

A legitimate polity is an extension of the covenantal relationship, constituted consensually through a pact, as a partnership or metapartnership of its constituents. There is no "state" in the Jewish political tradition, in the sense of a reified political entity complete and presumed self-sufficient in and of itself. The contemporary Hebrew term for state, *medinah*, refers in the Bible to a political unit with its own jurisdiction (*din*) within a larger entity, e.g., a province. While the term *medinah* is today used for politically sovereign states, its classical echoes still remind us that "polity" would be a better translation. The latter term offers wider and narrower expressions of meaning consistent with the Hebrew original—wider in that all entities with their own political-legal jurisdiction are polities and narrower in that no polity exists apart from its component elements, nor does it possess absolute sovereignty. Both dimensions are vital elements in the Jewish political tradition. In fact, the Jewish political tradition does not recognize state sovereignty in the modern sense of absolute independence. No state—a human creation—can be sovereign. In Judaism, only God is sovereign and furdeus, entrusting the exercise of sovereign powers to the people as a whole, mediated through the Torah-as-constitution, as provided through the divine covenant with Israel.

The Jewish people is a polity of equals, a commonwealth (*edah*), with all that implies for the organization and conduct of Jewish political affairs. While no single form of political organization is mandated by Jewish law or tradition, any form chosen must embody this basic republican principle. Jewish regimes have not always been democratic republics; because of the emphasis on God's role, they have aristocratic tendencies that often have degenerated into oligarchic patterns of rule. But with rare local exceptions, they have not been autocratic. The republican foundations of the Jewish political tradition have prevented that.

A proper Jewish polity embodies a suitable set of political relationships rather than any particular structure or regime. This emphasis on relationships is particularly relevant to a covenantal polity and helps reinforce Jewish republicanism, but it can also lead to the ignoring of structures that do not create extreme difficulties. The Jewish people as an *edah* takes as its point of departure a strong commitment to bargaining as the basic mode of political decision-making. In its best sense, this leads to negotiated cooperation based upon covenantal obligation; in its worst, to a willingness to haggle over everything, with minimum regard for norms or accepted procedures.

Political Tradition and the Language of Political Discourse

The Bible is rich in political terminology, as any close reading reveals. Indeed it remains the primary source of Hebrew political terms, many of which have been transmitted over the millennia with no or minimum change in meaning. The terminology as such and in context has substantial implications for understanding the sources of the Jewish political tradition and deserves full treatment on its own. Among those terms and phrases are several that are of special importance because they give meaning to fundamental political relationships and the regimes they shape. In essence, they are the Hebrew equivalents of the classic political terminology of ancient Greek and Latin. Summarizing what we have seen so far, the classic Jewish political world-view can be summarized as follows:

The kith (*moledet*) of tribes (*shevatim*) descended from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, which God raised up to be a nation (*goy*), became the Jewish people (*Am Yisrael*) through its covenant (*brit*) with God, which,

in turn, laid the basis for the establishment of the Jewish commonwealth (*edah*) under divine sovereignty (*malkhut shamayim*), bound by the divine constitutional teaching (*Torah*). The *am* so created must live as a community of equals (*kahal*), whose locus is the land of Israel (*Eretz Israel*), under the rule of law (*hukah, hok*) that applies to every citizen (*ezrah*), defined as a partner to the covenant (*ben-brit*). All citizens are linked to their neighbors (*rea*) by covenant obligation (*hesed*). Within these parameters there is latitude in choosing the form of government or regime as long as the proper relationships between the various parties are preserved. That, in turn, requires a system of shared authorities (*reshuyot*)—what today would be termed "checks and balances." These *reshuyot* are combined under three authoritative categories (*ketarim*): the authority of Torah (*keter torah*), the authority of civil governance (*keter malkhut*), and the authority of the priesthood (*keter kehunah*), each of which plays a role in the government of the *edah* through a system of shared powers. At any given time, different religious and political camps (*mahanot*) and parties (*miflagot*) within those camps compete for control of the governing institutions of the *edah*. Moreover, since the full achievement of its religio-political goals requires reformation of the existing order (*tiqqun olam*) and redemption (*geulah*), the Jewish political world-view is messianic, looking towards a better future rather than a golden past.

What is important about Jewish political terminology is not only that it exists in such abundance, had its origins in the very earliest epochs of Jewish history, and has remained extraordinarily consistent in meaning for some three millennia, but that it is so thoroughly rooted conceptually in the covenantal world-view that pervades the Jewish political tradition. Not only are there many obvious covenantal terms of political importance (e.g., *brit* and *hesed*). Rather, other terms also abound whose covenantal dimension is not usually recognized until they are examined more deeply (e.g., *edah, haver, va'ad*). In other words, Judaism is permeated with covenantal echoes, and nowhere more than in its Hebrew vocabulary.

Brit and *Hesed*: The Covenant or Federal Base

The basic simplicity of the covenant idea masks important complexities. The Hebrew term *brit* (covenant) conveys the sense of both separation and linkage, cutting and binding. The prophet Ezekiel referred to *masoret ha brit*—the covenant tradition (or bond)—as the central thread of Jewish existence (Ezek. 20:35–37). In his highly sensitive commentary to the Bible, Meir Loeb ben Yehiel Michael (1809–1879) offers us a good summary of the covenantal relationship between God and Abraham, described in Gen. 17: This covenant will be "between Me and thee," meaning that the binding obligation rests on both parties to the covenant, because Abraham also obligated himself to be a partner with God in the act of creation by perfecting what was created and by participating in its improvement.

This idea is of great importance because of what it offers in the way of building relationships. The Bible posits and develops a whole system of relationships based upon covenants, some of which, it suggests, were actual covenants between God and humankind and some of which seem to be figurative covenants between God and inanimate objects, such as the heavenly bodies. Inevitably present within the covenant idea is the sense of a contractual partnership in which the partners must, by definition, share in the implementation of certain common tasks and, at the same time, are able to preserve their respective integrities.

In some cases the partners are equals, in some they are not. Obviously, covenants between God and people, even between God and Israel, ultimately are covenants between unequals, who are redefined as relatively equal for the covenantally defined task at hand. The quite radical covenant idea thus inevitably suggests that God limits himself drastically by recognizing the freedom of humans to contract an obligation with God and to maintain their own integrities, doing so not simply to obey God but to hearken to God's word as covenant partners. The implications of this are developed in the biblical and Rabbinic literature

to suggest that, under the terms of the *brit*, in matters of *tiqqun olam*, God and humans are considered equal. Indeed, covenantal people are then required to choose whether or not to live up to the terms of the covenant. The Puritans, interestingly, understood this when they interpreted the covenantal basis of the biblical world-view as the *federal theology*, which emphasizes that the same covenant that tightly binds people to God also radically emancipates humanity and enables it to act on its own accord.

Edah and *Kahal*: The Republican Base

The covenant not only transformed a *goy*—primarily a kinship group with its own land and culture—into an *am*—a kinship group united through some vocation—but the *am* became an *edah*—a body politic based on consent. The term literally implies an assembly of all citizens that meets at regular times or frequently. Moshe Weinfeld has argued that the term *edah* actually described the regime prior to the introduction of the monarchy. In this respect it parallels (and historically precedes) similar phenomena, such as the *landesgemeinde* in Switzerland, the Icelandic *althing*, and the town meeting the United States. Crucial is that it continued to be used to describe the Jewish body politic in every period down to the present. Only in contemporary Israel has the term lost its authentic meaning, becoming a sociological expression intentionally devoid of political content. In all events, the original *edah* can be summarized as follows:

1. Political equality existed for those capable of bearing arms.
2. Decisions were made by an assembly that chose its own leaders.
3. The *edah* was portable and transcended geography.
4. Nevertheless, for it to function completely, the *edah* needed the land of Israel.
5. The Torah was the constitution of the *edah*.

These basic characteristics have been preserved with a minimum of modification over the centuries. After the end of Jewish political independence, the arms-bearing measure of political equality gave way to one of Torah study. In the twentieth century state of Israel, it reaquired its original meaning, while, in the rest of the world, its equivalent was activity and monetary support for Jewish causes. The principles of assembly, leadership, and decision-making have remained the same, although modes of assembling, leadership recruitment, and leaders' roles and responsibilities obviously have changed from time to time. The portability of the desert-born *edah* is a notable, continuing characteristic, as is attachment to Zion. The Torah of course has persisted as a constitution.

The documentary literature of every age is full of the classical usage of the term *edah*. Moreover, that body was invariably defined as including all adult males as participants in fundamental decision-making. At the very least, the *edah* as a whole was responsible for actions of a constitutional character, whether electing kings in ancient Israel, constituting the Council of the Four Lands in the medieval Poland, or forming communities in the modern United States. The *edah* offered a variety of adaptations of covenantal principles, with a new one for each new era of Jewish political adjustment. A high point was reached in the Jewish communities of the Middle Ages. The congregational form itself—the *kahal* or *kehillah*—is a subsidiary product of the linkage of the covenant and the *edah*. Thus the term *kahal*, in the Bible used almost synonymously with *edah*, became the terminological subsidiary of *edah* in its constituted local dimension.

Edah, *Medinah*, and *Kehillah*—The Arenas of Jewish Political Organization

From earliest times, the Jewish polity has been organized in three arenas, generally definable as national, regional or intermediate, and local. The first form in which these three arenas was constituted was nationally, in the form of the *edah*, constituted by the tribes, each with its own government institutions. Each tribe was, in turn, a union

of extended households (*batei av*). After the Israelite settlement in Canaan, the most prominent form of local organization was the city or township (*ir*), with its own assembly and council (*sh'ar hair* or *ziknei hair*).

Once formulated in early Israelite history, this division of governance has remained a permanent feature of Jewish political life. This is so despite frequent changes in the forms of organization of the several arenas and in the terminology used to describe them. Thus just as the *bet av* gave way to the *ir*, the latter gave way to the *kehillah* (local community). In turn, the *kehillah* became the molecular unit of organization for all postbiblical Jewry, especially since a *kehillah* could be established by any ten adult Jewish males who so constituted themselves. While the *kehillah* survives in the diaspora, in contemporary Israel it has once again reemerged as an *ir*.

Similarly, the breakdown of the traditional tribal system (a phenomenon that long preceded the first exile) resulted in the replacement of the *shevet* (tribe) by the *medinah* (the autonomous jurisdiction or province), a regional framework that embraces a congeries of *kehillot* that it unites within an organizational structure, as in *Medinat Yehud* (Judea in the Persian Empire). In the diaspora, *medinah* became virtually interchangeable with *eretz* (country) to describe the intermediate arena, as in *Eretz Lita* (the organized Jewish community in late medieval Lithuania). In modern times, the term came to mean a politically sovereign state, as it is precisely used in connection with *Medinat Yisrael* (the State of Israel).

Actions of constitutional import taken by and for the *edah* as a whole are binding on every one of its constituent parts. One illustration of this rule is provided by the connected biblical narratives relating to the settlement of the two and a half tribes on the eastern bank of the Jordan (Num. 32 and Josh. 22). It is significant that the initial approach, by the Reubenites and Gadites, was to Moses, Eleazar the priest, and the tribal magistrates (*nesiim*, Num. 32:2). Similarly, it was in the name of *Adat Adonai*, "The Congregation of the Lord," that the two and a half tribes were subsequently upbraided for the construction of an altar on their way home from Joshua's wars. At issue, as Josh 22:16–20 makes explicit, was the contention that the original commitment to worship the one God had been undertaken by the entire *edah* and that the entire *edah* would be held responsible for any violation—even if it be on the part of a minority.

The system is not, however, a hierarchy and certainly not centralized, since all the important lines of political communication and decision-making are not controlled by a unitary government transmitting its directives through a clearly stratified system of regional and local instruments. Rather, the *edah* is a framing institution that, among its various tasks, establishes boundary rules for the pursuit of political objectives but leaves to its constituent parts considerable leeway in the conduct of their political affairs. Individual *medinot* and *kehillot* are not merely aspects of the *edah*. Like the *edah*, they derive their authority directly from the series of covenants periodically entered into by God and the entire Jewish people. That is why, to quote another biblical example, divine sanction could be granted for secession from an overwhelming centralized monarchy and why, during the High Middle Ages, individual communities could enact highly particularistic *taqqanot ha-qahal* (communal ordinances). Moreover, and notwithstanding the very special place allotted to the land of Israel in all Jewish thought, the preeminence of the *medinah* in matters constitutional has never been taken for granted. On the contrary, it proved to be a bone of serious contention in talmudic times, as in our own.

Of the many implications of this organizational framework, the most important is that the traditional system of Jewish government might best be described as a matrix rather than a pyramid. It does not posit "high" and "low" power centers, with gradations of power flowing down from the top (or out from the center). Rather, it forms a matrix of larger and smaller arenas of authority, linked through common adherence to a single recognized constitutional framework and through formal and informal lines of mutual communication. Furthermore, the texture of the lines of communication

between and within the various arenas has, over the long haul, provided the system with the flexibility necessary to its stability and resilience. Since the system was not dependent on the maintenance of any single central institution, it did not disintegrate the moment an individual locus of power was destroyed (as happened when the first two Jewish commonwealths were destroyed) or withered away (the fate of the subsequent patriarchate in the land of Israel and exilarchate in Babylonia). These were undoubtedly severe blows to the Jewish polity, but they did not prove fatal because survival of the *edah* had never been dependent on such mechanisms.

To take a positive example, in the eleventh-fourteenth centuries C.E., when the older seats of jurisdiction in Babylonia and the land of Israel lost all authority outside of their immediate geographic perimeter and before the newer centers of the Iberian Peninsula (Sepharad) and West-Central Europe (Ashkenaz) had developed, substitute organizational frameworks emerged. The fact that institutional authority had been vested almost exclusively in the *kehillah* did not vitiate the continuity of the *edah*. The "nerves" of the system continued to exist and, indeed, precisely during this epoch, flourished, with the legal-religious correspondence between individual legal decisors serving as a communications network of extraordinary efficiency and repute.

The Jewish organizational framework thus differs from the models of centralization and decentralization dominant in much of the current literature of political science. Instead, it posits an appropriate noncentralization, found to be characteristic of all federal systems based—as in the Jewish tradition—on the notion of a covenantal relationship between partners. In this scheme, the diffusion of power is not a matter of grace (dependent upon the whim—or weakness—of a central authority) but a matter of right. The rank order of the several arenas of government is deliberately left flexible, allowing the system as a whole to adapt to the changing circumstances of its environment. The history of the Jewish polity indicates that some concentration of governmental power in the founding institutions of the *edah* may have been permissible; but this was never mandatory. Far more entrenched is the tradition whereby authority is spread widely (even if not in equal proportions) among a range of regional authorities, each with the right to independent self-expression.

Judaism and Politics Among the Nations

Biblical Judaism emphasized the separation of the Jewish people from the nations because of its special vocation. Indeed the Hebrew word *am* in the Bible essentially signifies a nation (*goy*) with a vocation. This is true not only for Israel, the *am* of God, who gives the Israelites their vocation, but also for Moab, the *am* of Chemosh, who gives the Moabites their vocation. In one respect, the Bible is a record of the struggle between the demands of Judaism and the political reality that prevented the Jewish polities from ignoring their neighbors. Israel's leaders regularly sought to reach an accommodation with some of those neighbors in order to resist the designs of others against them.

During the Second Commonwealth, sages devised the legal system that later became known as Judaism, designed to separate the Jewish people not only as a collectivity but as individuals. At the same time, their more prudent leaders pursued a general policy of accommodation, punctuated by periodic seizures of power by less prudent figures, which led to disastrous revolts against the power (Persian, Seleucid, or Roman) within whose sphere of influence either Judea or the Jewish people fell. After the last of those revolts, under Bar Kokhba in 132–135 C.E., Rabbinic sages depoliticized the Jewish people insofar as it was possible to do so. This was a political strategy to preserve them from their follies and a political effort to keep them from pursuing disastrous actions that, as a vigorous and believing people, they constantly were willing to try but at which, as a small people, they were not capable of being successful.

Over the next 1700 years, this Judaism of accommodation dominated Jewish political thinking, reinforced at every turn by

the situation of exile and the lack of rooted political power. At certain times and places Jewish leaders could supplement their accomodationist politics with a politics of maneuver that gave the Jewish community just enough room to survive. Halakhic Judaism went so far as to declare that except in a few utterly impermissible spheres, Jews were to follow the principle "*Dina Demalkhuta Dina*:" the law of the kingdom is the law. Acceptance of the law of the foreign suzerain thus was made a halakhic requirement.

With emancipation, Jewish efforts moved from simply seeking accommodation to struggling for equal rights and citizenship. Often, this included forging alliances with non-Jews who had similar aspirations. Now the previously conservative Jewish community—whose conservatism stemmed from a fear that change would upset the hard won right to live by their own laws and institutions—adopted a politics of revolution and liberalism, which the experiences of early modernity suggested could only improve the Jews' position through the extension of emancipation and equal rights.

Judaism accordingly was reinterpreted by its more liberal adherents as fundamentally supportive of liberalism and its goals. The Bible, especially the prophetic message of social justice, became the source of this new ideology. While the results of European revolutionary movements were distinctly mixed and often worked to the disadvantage of the Jews as well as the general population, enough good came out of these efforts to reinforce Jewish expectations and wed Jews to the idea that the problems resulted from the revolutions' not going far enough.

The only dissenting voices in the community were of those few Jews who saw in Jewish emancipation and equality an invitation to extensive assimilation and who desired to preserve Jewish separateness so that the Jews could continue to fulfill their religious vocation. Increasingly, this group was limited to the Ultra-Orthodox, whose very existence could be understood as a religiously fostered political response to the new reality of modernity. Prior to emancipation, traditional Judaism had a flexibility that enabled it to adapt to changing times and conditions without any sense of internal disruption. Now, arguing and fighting for a more rigid definition of Judaism, the traditionalists developed the idea that any change toward greater accommodation with the external environment at the price of Jewish separatism was bad.

The traditionalists were opposed by Jewish religious liberals, who also sought a new political accommodation that involved abjuring the political dimension of Judaism and reforming Jewish ideas and institutions, so that its religious dimension would not be incompatible with the surrounding Christian world or with modern trends. These Jews developed Reform Judaism as their religious and political response. A third group held that Judaism as it had developed historically should be maintained but interpreted with a liberal spirit and that Jewish political life should be tempered in consideration of modern realities. While in many respects, this is an ideologically satisfying position, it was difficult to actualize on a practical level.

In essence, because of the political and religious realities of the world in which Jews found themselves, all three approaches had limited success. Ultra-Orthodoxy proved too rigid to attract or hold more than a small minority of all Jews. And for their part, the modern Orthodoxy that emerged from it and the more liberal Conservative Judaism, while willing and able to accommodate secular forces outside the Jewish community, lost credibility in the eyes of the traditionalists while failing to inspire those attuned to Reform. Reform Judaism in the nineteenth century, on the other hand, rapidly turned into a creed the idea that Jews are only adherents of Judaism, a religion, and not members of a nation with political aspirations at all. Only the new political realities of the twentieth century drove the vast majority of Jews back to a sense of Jewish peoplehood and common Jewish political interests, if only for physical survival. Thus, by the latter part of the twentieth century, it is all but agreed within world Jewry that, while Jews have plural religious expressions of Judaism, they are united through their politics, that all Jews who either wish to remain Jewish or feel they have no choice come together around common political interests.

The Jewish revolutionary left has collapsed in the wake of the general failure of the movements of the revolutionary left. At the same time, Jewish liberalism has been reinforced both by those who remain liberal because they see liberalism as best both ideologically and in terms of Jewish self interests and those who come to liberalism from collapsed positions further left. It would not be unfair to say that at the twentieth century's end, despite the rise of political conservatism in much of the western world where almost all Jews live, over three-fourths of all Jews remained firmly entrenched in the liberal camp as strong supporters of both human rights and the welfare state. For many, whatever the role political self interest has to play in their liberalism, they understood it as a reflection of their Judaism. For that matter, Jews who remained or became conservative more often than not have also made that ideological decision based upon their understanding of what Judaism requires of them. Both positions reinforce the close link between Judaism and politics in the sphere of external Jewish relations as much as Judaism and politics have always been linked on Jewish internal matters.

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Pseudo-Philo, Biblical Characters in

THE *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* (LAB) of Pseudo-Philo retells the biblical story beginning with Adam and ending with Saul's death. Its genre is "rewritten Bible."[1] Its author is called Pseudo-Philo because the text was passed down with the Philonic corpus, although it is clearly not by Philo of Alexandria. There is general agreement that it comes from the first century C.E., but scholars debate whether it was written before or after the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple in 70 C.E.

LAB freely rewrites the biblical story. In so doing, it uses a variety of biblical and non-biblical materials. The author applies the sacred text to his own situation. Alterations to the biblical story result in a coherent narrative conveying a particular point of view. Therefore, it is appropriate to analyze LAB using the tools of literary criticism—analysis of plot, characterization, setting, and so on.[2] This article investigates the way Pseudo-Philo rewrites biblical characters. It will not engage in detailed, tradition-critical work, although parallels will be noted occasionally.[3] Rather, the narrative will be engaged as story, seeing both how it is similar to and differs from the biblical story, and how the narrative advances Pseudo-Philo's central themes. The dominant theme in LAB is God's unconditional faithfulness to Israel. This is in some tension with another main theme—moral causality, that one gets what one deserves. The same tension exists within the biblical text. Pseudo-Philo also shows God's control of human events.

Since we cannot here analyze every biblical character in LAB, we concentrate on those whose portrayal sheds most light on Pseudo-Philo's method and point of view. Pseudo-Philo is particularly interested in Israel's leaders.[4] As we analyze each biblical character, we will look particularly at the roles of God and Israel.

Joktan and Abraham

The episode of the tower of Babel in LAB interweaves the stories of Abraham and Joktan. Except for the basic narrative framework, most of the material is the author's creation.

Pseudo-Philo adds many names of his own devising to the genealogies of Genesis. He also adds the idea that each of humanity's three divisions has a leader. Joktan is the Shemites' leader. In Genesis, Joktan is Shem's grandson (10:25–26, 29; cp. 1 Chr. 1:19–20, 23), but we hear no more of him in the Bible.

In LAB, Abraham first appears when humanity decides to build the tower, while in Genesis he appears immediately afterward. Genesis sees the building as the culmination of human rebellion against God. Against this backdrop, God chooses Abraham to make of him a righteous people. In Genesis, Abraham has done nothing that explains his election. Pseudo-Philo, noting that Abraham's election is contiguous to the tower of Babel episode in the Bible, creates a connection between them—Abraham's election results from his refusal to participate in the building.

The story follows a pattern found elsewhere in LAB (chapters 9, 10, and 44).[5] First, humans plot evil; second, others oppose that plot and form a counter-plan; third, someone dissents from the counter-plan; fourth, God intervenes on the side of the dissenter. The pattern contrasts those who propose the counter-plan and the one who dissents. The evil plot in this case is the proposal to build the tower. Abraham and twelve other Shemites refuse to participate, and Joktan plans to save them. Abraham does not cooperate with Joktan's plans. Finally, God intervenes, proving Abraham right. Joktan and Abraham are both Shemites who want to do the right thing, but Abraham is most in tune with God's will.

When brought before the chiefs, the resisters declare that the tower affronts God. This is a typical trial scene.[6] One expects them either to be executed or saved by divine intervention. But Joktan diverts the expected flow of the action, suggesting a seven-day delay so that the defendants might repent of their "evil plans." The narrator discloses Joktan's motivation: "He was of their tribe and served God" (6:6).[7] Joktan provides for their escape and tells them to trust in God (6:9).

Joktan seems admirable in wanting to rescue the resisters. But Abraham refuses to cooperate with Joktan's plans, saying that he trusts God. He continues, "If there be any sin of mine so flagrant that I should be burned up, let the will of God be done" (6:11). He is confident that God is just.

Next morning, Abraham tells his interrogators that when he awoke, his companions were gone. This is a clever answer, since it is true. Joktan must now execute Abraham's sentence. "With great emotion," he casts him into the fire. God rescues Abraham and destroys the bystanders. This is typical for a trial scene, and it vindicates Abraham. This story makes important points about the nature of leadership and the proper way to serve God. Human action, even when done in the service of God, is valid only if God initiates it.

In Pseudo-Philo, the contrast between Abraham and the rest of humanity is clearer than in the Bible. First, God delivers a speech denigrating humanity. Then, God decides to bring Abram into the land that God protected from the flood. The contrast between the land of Israel and the rest of the world enhances the contrast between Abraham and the rest of humanity. God continues, "For there I will have my servant Abram dwell and I will establish my covenant with him and will bless his seed and be lord for him as God forever" (7:4). As is regularly the case in Pseudo-Philo, God's role in the narrative is enhanced. The reader hears God's own reasoning about the faithlessness of humanity and the election of Abraham.

Amram

In the Bible, Moses' birth to Amram is gratuitous. Not so in Pseudo-Philo, where the story of Moses' birth displays the same structure as Abraham's story. Pharaoh hatches an evil plan, the elders propose a counter-plan, Amram dissents, and God intervenes,

proving Amram right. The elders are well-intentioned, but only Amram really trusts in God. LAB thus implicitly draws a parallel between Amram and Abraham. That the Israelites decide to remain celibate to thwart Pharaoh's plans is common in midrashic texts, but elsewhere Amram participates in the plan.

The Israelite elders learn that pharaoh is about to kill their male newborns, marry the females to their slaves, and reduce all of Israel to slavery. They decide to stop marrying and having intercourse. They say, "For it is better to die without sons until we know what God may do" (9:2). The elders connect intermarriage with idolatry, and Pseudo-Philo condemns idolatry.[8] But Amram disagrees with this plan. He agrees that God will respond to the situation in due time, but to forego procreation would harm Israel. His speech reads like a précis of Pseudo-Philo's views. He says that God's promises to Abraham will be fulfilled, that God will not let his plans for Israel be foiled, and that the covenant with Israel's fathers will not be "in vain" (9:3–4).

Tamar

Amram invokes the memory of Tamar as one who took extreme measures to avoid separation from Israel and intercourse with gentiles (9:5). For Pseudo-Philo and other Jewish interpreters, Tamar is a positive figure, as in Gen. 38. Pseudo-Philo exculpates her for sleeping with her father-in-law (Lev. 18:15; 20:12): "Her intent was not fornication, but being unwilling to separate from the sons of Israel . . ." (9:5).[9] He quotes her as refusing "to have intercourse with gentiles," words not present in the Bible. Pseudo-Philo often expresses disapproval of intermarriage.

Moses

The author simultaneously exalts Moses and stresses God's initiative. In 9:7–8, God speaks of Amram's son, saying that Moses will serve him forever.[10] Through him, God will work signs and wonders such as have been done for no one else (see Deut. 34; Exod. 4:21; 34:10; Ps. 105:26–27). Because of Moses, God will show Israel his glory (see Exod. 33–34).[11] God will "kindle for him my lamp that will abide in him," words often taken to refer to the Law.

God then says, "I will show him my covenant that no one has seen." This may refer to the Sinaitic covenant.[12] God declares that he will show his "Law and statutes and judgments" to Moses.[13] God declares that he will create an eternal light for Moses and that his illumination of Moses will never cease. God finishes by saying that he thought of Moses long before, when limiting human life to 120 years (Gen. 6:3; LAB 3:2). In the Bible, Moses does live for 120 years (Deut. 34:7).[14]

Through Moses God will reveal his ways and the Law.[15] In 9:16, the narrator says that God freed Israel through Moses as he said, so God is faithful to his promises.

In 9:10, Moses' sister, Miriam, has a dream prophesying Moses' birth.[16] An angelic figure tells her to tell her parents, "Behold he who will be born from you will be cast forth into the water; likewise through him the water will be dried up. And I will work signs through him and save my people, and he will exercise leadership always (*ducatum*)" (9:10). The symmetry between the Nile and the Red Sea implies God's control of history. Pseudo-Philo often posits such symmetries (as do other Jewish interpreters). The author stresses God's action and sees Moses as a divine instrument. Here Moses exercises "leadership." *Dux*, *ducatum*, and *ducere* are applied to many characters in LAB, but only of Moses is it said that he is leader always.[17]

In LAB, pharaoh's daughter comes to the Nile because of her dreams, so again God directs the action.[18] As in the Bible, she finds Moses and recognizes that he is a Hebrew child. Her recognition of Moses as a Hebrew goes unexplained in the biblical text. Pseudo-Philo explains it by saying Moses was circumcised, an explanation found in the midrash as well.[19] This indicates Moses' special character. Pharaoh's daughter calls him Moses as in the biblical text, but LAB has Moses' mother call him Melchiel, which in Hebrew means "God is

my king."[20] Moses' very name attests to God's sovereignty. The last sentence of the chapter indicates Moses' status because God acts through him, but it simultaneously affirms that God, not Moses, is ultimately responsible for freeing the Israelites. All this happens "as he (God) had said."

The story of Moses' birth sets out the themes that dominate Moses' story. Throughout the story, the focus is really on God. Through Moses, God gives the Torah and communicates with Israel, so Moses is God's instrument. Moses takes initiative only in interceding for Israel, which he does frequently. His intercessions stress characteristic points—Israel's unworthiness and God's faithfulness to the covenant.

Pseudo-Philo summarizes Exod. 2–13 in a single sentence (10:1). God sends Moses, frees the Israelites, and sends the ten plagues. Again, the focus is on God's action. In Exod. 14, when the people are trapped between the Red Sea and the Egyptians, they cry out to God and then complain to Moses. LAB 10:2 develops the people's words. They accuse God of not honoring his covenants with their fathers. This makes the people seem arrogant and also serves to heighten their confrontation with God.

Chapter 10 exhibits the same structure found in the stories of Abraham and Amram. In this case, the structure is more complex.[21] First, the Egyptians pursue Israel. Then the tribes, in three groups of four each, devise three strategies. One is to commit suicide in the sea, another is to return to slavery in Egypt, and the last is to fight, trusting in God's help. The last plan seems good, since it shows faith in God and courage before enemies. But Moses ignores all the plans, thus rejecting them, and prays. God responds by saving Israel. Because of the pattern, Moses is implicitly compared to Abraham and Amram. Each displays trust in God that goes beyond that of their fellows.

This, Moses' first intercession, occurs at the Red Sea. In the Bible, Moses does not intercede at this point. But God does ask Moses, "Why do you cry out to me?" (Exod. 14:15). Pseudo-Philo notices that Moses has not cried out to God, and so he adds Moses' intercessory prayer.

LAB rewrites the story of the Red Sea to emphasize God's role. Exod. 14:21 says that Moses stretched out his hand, and God drove the sea back by a wind. LAB says that God "rebuked" the sea, that it was God's "fearful din" that and the breath of God's anger (perhaps a reference to the wind in the biblical text; cp. Exod. 15:8) that drove back the sea and caused the world's foundations to be laid bare. In Exod. 14:24, God panics the Egyptians and then clogs their wheels. In LAB, he hardens the perception of the Egyptians so that they do not even know they are entering the sea. Finally, in Exod. 14:26–28, it is said simply that God orders Moses to stretch out his hand and when he does so the sea returns. Pseudo-Philo is clearer about God's role in this final action, since he says twice that God commanded the sea itself to return, once before and once after God tells Moses to raise his staff.

When God informs Moses that he is about to promulgate the Torah through him, the accent is clearly on God's initiative (11:1–3). God says, among other things, that he will put his words in Moses' mouth. Pseudo-Philo transfers the command for sexual abstinence before the Sinai theophany from Moses to God (11:2). After God's words about the giving of the Torah, LAB says, "And Moses did what God commanded him" (11:3; see Num. 17:26; Exod. 7:6; 40:16). Later in the book, sinners from the tribe of Benjamin say, "We decided in this time to investigate the book of the Law, whether God had really written what was in it or Moses had taught these things by himself " (25:13). LAB 11 leaves no doubt about the Law's divine origin.

On Mount Sinai, Moses sees the tree of life, said to be the origin of the wood that Moses threw into the bitter water to make it drinkable (11:15; Exod. 15:25). Seeing the tree of life is in other texts an apocalyptic vision. In chapter 19 God grants Moses further such revelations.

In 12:1, Moses descends the mountain, and his face shines with glorious light that outshines the sun and moon, a detail added to the biblical story. This serves less to glorify Moses than to underline God's majesty and the revelation's authenticity. The people

do not recognize Moses because of the light. The lack of recognition, followed by recognition when Moses speaks, is unique to Pseudo-Philo. The author has a predilection for such recognition scenes. The device casts human perception into doubt. The author also uses the incident to draw another of his analogies, in this case between this scene and Joseph's brothers' recognition of Joseph in Egypt.

There is a slight change in the way that the people ask Aaron to make the calf. In Exodus, the people say that they do not know what has become of Moses, "the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt" (Exod. 32:1). In LAB, they say that Moses is "the one through whom wonders were done before our eyes." The change is enough to shift the focus away from the role of Moses as leader ("brought us") to Moses as God's instrument ("through whom"). In both the Bible and LAB, Moses smashes the tablets of the Law, but in LAB he does so only after seeing that the writing on the tablets was gone, a detail absent from the biblical story. LAB and other Jewish authors could not accept the idea that Moses destroyed God's writing.

LAB 12 streamlines and gives more logical order to the story of the golden calf. In Exodus, Moses intercedes twice. Between the two intercessions, he descends to punish the people. He calls on those loyal to God and they put many in Israel to the sword. In LAB, Moses descends the mountain as soon as God tells him of the golden calf and deals with the people. Only then does he return and intercede. While Exodus showcases Moses' anger, Pseudo-Philo pays more attention to his distress, comparing him to a woman in labor for the first time. Then the reader hears Moses' own thoughts, as he rejects despair and decides that despite the people's sin, what God had declared to him could never be in vain. Pseudo-Philo omits the slaughter that Moses causes in Israel. There is punishment for those who sinned, but only after Moses identifies the guilty though in a way that leaves the decision up to God. Those forced to participate are not punished.

Moses' intercessory prayer in LAB 12:8–9 corresponds to the prayers in Exod. 32:11–13 and 33:12–16. In Exod. 33 the prayer gives greater attention to the fact that Moses is in God's favor than that Israel is God's chosen (33:13). God responds, "I will do the very thing that you have asked; for you have found favor in my sight, and I know you by name" (33:17). In LAB, Moses never mentions that he is in God's favor, so it is similar to Moses' earlier intercession (Exod. 32). Rather, the lengthy prayer recites God's labors for Israel, notes Israel's unfaithfulness, and warns God that if he is not merciful, he will have no one to glorify him and no one will trust him in the future. He says, "Do not let your labor be in vain." God relents, saying, "Behold I have been made merciful according to your words" (12:9). There is no reference to God's favor for Moses, or his knowing Moses by name. The rewriting de-emphasizes Moses and shifts the focus to God.

LAB's version of the spy story and the people's rebellion from Num. 13–14 omits the words of Aaron and Moses to the people (Num. 14:7–9). Rather, as soon as the people rebel, God appears and launches into a speech about his faithfulness, their disobedience, and his anger (LAB 15:5–6). This amplifies God's speech in Num. 14:11–12. Moses answers with an intercession emphasizing his own insignificance and begging for mercy, claiming that no human could exist were it not for God's mercy. Moses says that it is God who is the creator, not himself. This contrasts with Moses' intercession in Num. 14:13–19, where Moses does not speak of his insignificance. Pseudo-Philo's changes decrease the roles of Moses and Aaron and emphasize God's role, stressing humanity's sinfulness, including that of Moses.

Korah's rebellion (Num. 16) is rewritten to minimize Moses' role and sharpen the confrontation between Korah and God (LAB 16). Pseudo-Philo excises the sharp confrontations between Moses and Korah found in Num. 16.[22]

At the end of his life, Moses delivers a speech (19:2–5; cp. Deut. 31–34; *Jub.* 1; *Assumption of Moses; Ant.* § 302–326). He says that the people will lament his passing and wish for another shepherd like him, who will "pray always for our sins and to be

heard for our iniquities" (19:3). It is as an intercessor that they will miss him.

As in the Bible, Moses can see the promised land only from a distance. God tells him that he may not enter lest he see the idolatry the people will commit there (LAB 19:7). This contrasts with the Bible, which says Moses was unable to enter because of his lack of faith when he struck the rock twice for water (Deut. 32:48–52; see Num. 20:1–13; Exod. 17:1–7; Ps. 106:32). Pseudo-Philo avoids any impression that Moses does not fulfill his mission perfectly. Pseudo-Philo never narrates Moses' lack of faith in Num. 20. By blaming Moses' exclusion from the land on the people's sins, the author also emphasizes Israel's unfaithfulness. Moses answers God by interceding yet again for the people (19:8–9).

God shows Moses more than the land. He also grants him a vision of a sort often granted to apocalyptic seers. Other ancient Jewish texts also credit Moses with reception of esoteric knowledge (e.g., *Testament of Moses*, 4 Ezra). God says that he will keep Moses' staff before him as a reminder of the covenant, as the rainbow reminds him of Noah's covenant. Moses' intercessory function essentially extends beyond his death, and the covenant will continue at least partly because of him.

The rest of the chapter glorifies Moses above all others. God tells him that even the angels will mourn his death, and that he will be glorified with his fathers and await God's visitation of the world. When the eschaton comes, Moses will be raised to dwell "in the place of sanctification." Moses' response is like that of an apocalyptic seer. He asks how much time has passed and how much remains, receiving an enigmatic answer that would easily fit an apocalypse (19:15). Then he is "filled with understanding" and his appearance becomes "glorious." The song of the heavenly hosts stops at his death, which has never happened before, nor will it happen again. God himself buries Moses "on a high place and in the light of all the world."

Pseudo-Philo's focus on Moses is fitting, given his interest in the covenant, the people's failure to live up to it, God's faithfulness, God's mercy as motivated by his promises to Israel's ancestors, leadership in Israel, and his contrast between divine and human initiative. All these themes come through in Moses' portrayal. The attention given to Moses is notable given the fact that, aside from the stories of Abraham and Moses, Pseudo-Philo concentrates on material from the books of Judges and Samuel.

The glorification of Moses in LAB 19 might seem inconsistent with the author's desire to enhance God's role in the narrative, even when that means de-emphasizing the initiative of biblical heroes. The inconsistency is only apparent. It is precisely because Moses has complete trust in God, displays no presumption, looks to God to determine his every move, and teaches the people to obey God and to blame their own sinfulness for their suffering, that he now, at the end of his life and after his task is completed, receives such glory in the eyes of humanity, the angels, and God.

Aaron

Aaron's role in the episode of the golden calf reflects a desire to exculpate him somewhat. In the Bible, Aaron promptly complies with the people's request that he make a golden idol. In LAB, he reasons with them, urging them to wait for Moses who "will explain from his own mouth the Law of God" (12:2). He gives in only because he fears the people's strength (12:3). Similarly, LAB omits the confrontation in Exodus between an angry Moses and an Aaron who ducks his own guilt and blames the people (32:21–24).

Joshua

Joshua succeeds Moses, but Moses takes no active role in the transition. The succession is purely God's work. This contrasts with the Bible where Joshua has the spirit "because Moses had laid his hands on him" (Deut. 34:9). It contrasts also with the *Testament of Moses*, which is a long testamentary speech by Moses to Joshua in which he commissions Joshua.

As in the Bible, the account of Joshua's

career begins with God's speech to Joshua, but Pseudo-Philo goes beyond the Bible in saying that God establishes a covenant with him (20:1). God tells Joshua to don Moses' "garments of wisdom." He does so and becomes a fit successor to Moses. Joshua delivers a speech to the people full of typical Deuteronomistic theology. The people remember the prophecy of Eldad and Modad, prophesying that Joshua would succeed Moses, and they remember that Moses was not jealous. In the Bible, Moses' lack of jealousy refers to the prophesying of the other two, but in LAB it refers to his knowledge of Joshua's succession. Leadership is not for self-aggrandizement but for the good of God's people.

In LAB 21, God tells Joshua that Israel will sin after his death. Joshua utters an intercessory prayer, asking God to give the people "a wise heart and a prudent mind" and requesting that God supply for the people a good ruler, in fulfillment of the promise in Gen. 49:10. God later answers Joshua's prayer by appointing Kenaz. Once the land is apportioned, the people declare that God has fulfilled all of his promises. Joshua blesses them, prays that they may remain faithful to God, and that a temple may be built in fulfillment of God's promise. Israel's history has culminated in the fulfillment of God's vision for it. It needs only remain faithful for this situation to be permanent.

In Josh. 22, a crisis arises when the tribes in Transjordan build an altar. The other tribes confront them, accuse them of idolatry, and threaten war. The Transjordanian tribes protest that they merely want to prevent the tribes west of the Jordan from excluding them from worship. Ultimately the tribes in Transjordan relent. In the Bible, the entire episode is presented as an interaction between the tribes as a whole, except where Phineas acts as spokesman for the majority of the tribes and accepts the explanation of the tribes and their decision to cease their cultic activity. Pseudo-Philo rewrites this episode so that Joshua plays the key role, thus presenting Joshua as a true leader. Joshua and the elders are the ones who protest the building. They hear the explanation of the altar builders, and then Joshua explains that loyalty to God consists not in sacrifices but in obedience to Torah. He counsels them to meditate on the Law day and night. This takes God's words to Joshua in Josh. 1:8 and makes them Joshua's advice to the tribes. He is wise leader who leaves ultimate judgment to God. He says that if they are guilty, they will be punished, and if only ignorant, God will be merciful. He then prays for them. He demonstrates a balance of firmness, humility, and deference to God's judgment that makes him an ideal leader.

In both the Bible and LAB, Joshua ends his career with a covenant-making ceremony. Pseudo-Philo adds that Joshua has a dream the night before the ceremony in which he is told all that he is to say. This is typical of Pseudo-Philo. He makes absolutely clear that it is God, not Joshua, who is behind things. As in the Bible, Joshua delivers God's words to the people with the prophetic messenger formula, "Thus says the Lord."

Kenaz

Kenaz is barely mentioned in the Bible, where he is father to the first judge, Othniel, about whom little is said. In LAB, Kenaz becomes the first judge, and Pseudo-Philo fabricates a long and complex narrative about him (chapters 25–28). Because he is a character largely of Pseudo-Philo's own making, his story clearly reveals Pseudo-Philo's portrait of a good leader.

Kenaz is chosen by lots to lead the people and to determine whether they are pure enough to go to war. His first act is to remind the people of Moses' and Joshua's admonition to obey the Law. He tells the people that God has declared that some of them are guilty of disobedience, and that they must cast lots to find the guilty party, and they do so. This is based on the Achan episode in Josh. 7, to which the author refers in LAB 25:7. As did Joshua in the Achan episode, Kenaz burns the offenders. He addresses the people, calling them those who have seen God's wonders, and cursing those who, like the sinners, do not believe.

Kenaz is very successful militarily against the Amorites (LAB 27). Then some begin

to murmur against him. He imprisons the troublemakers and decides to win a battle with only a few soldiers, thus proving his courage and trust in God. What follows echoes Gideon's story in Jdgs. 7. Kenaz prepares three hundred soldiers with trumpets and then enters the Amorite camp. Before doing so, he prays, asking God to send a sign. Kenaz plans to draw his sword in the midst of the camp. If the Amorites recognize him, that will mean that God is with him. If they do not recognize him, he will be killed. His willingness to embrace death is remarkable: "Even if I be handed over to death, I know that the Lord has not heard me because of my faults and has handed me over to my enemies. But he will not destroy his inheritance by my death" (27:7). This is the sentiment voiced by Abraham in LAB 6:11. Both have ultimate faith in God's justice.

Kenaz asks for a sign as does Gideon, but while Gideon asks for a sign because he is reluctant to engage in battle, Kenaz simply wants to know whether God will bring him victory. The sign is to take place within the enemy camp itself, so even before receiving the sign, Kenaz demonstrates trust by venturing into the camp.

God is with Kenaz. The Amorites recognize his sword. An angel confuses them and they kill each other in great numbers. Kenaz also kills many. Toward the end of the battle, Kenaz cannot release his grip on his sword (cp. 2 Sam. 23:10). Pseudo-Philo turns this detail into a commentary on his own times. Kenaz asks an Amorite what he ought to do. The man tells him he must wash his hand in a Hebrew's blood. Kenaz instead kills the Amorite and washes his hand in his blood, thus releasing his hand. The message is that foreigners will use Israelites against one another, and that an Israelite ought not be fooled. Kenaz proves himself a shrewd defender of Israel.

The Israelites survey the battlefield in the morning and are astonished. Kenaz says, "Why are you amazed? Is the way of men like the ways of God? For among men a great number prevails, but with God whatever he has decided" (27:12). Kenaz voices one of Pseudo-Philo's favorite themes—the ways of God are not those of humans. God's attitude to Kenaz's plan to defeat Israel's enemies is complex. God does approve his plan to enter the Amorite camp and seek a sign. But God bypasses Kenaz's preparations involving three hundred soldiers with trumpets. Kenaz makes those preparations without consulting God, and that they prove to be superfluous. God goes Kenaz one better. While Kenaz aims to demonstrate that God can save by a few, God shows that he does not even need these few.

Israel now glorifies God, not Kenaz (27:13–14). They realize that God deserves belief, and they proclaim God's wonders. They now believe that God intends to save his people and that he does not need great numbers, but only holiness.

Kenaz calls from prison those who had doubted him and condemns them to death. They confess that they committed the same sins as the earlier sinners (chapter 25)—lack of trust in God, expressed, for example, by doubting God's wonders for Israel or suspecting that what was written in the Law was Moses' invention. Kenaz's trust in God contrasts with the sinners' skepticism.

Kenaz's final words, a vision he sees (cp. Moses' vision before his death), and his death are related in chapter 28. He says that he has seen the wonders God will work for them "in the last days," establishes a covenant with them so that they will obey the Law, and reminds them of the sinners' fate. Kenaz is filled with a holy spirit and prophesies. He sees the creation and humankind. The outcome of human history is humanity's sin against God. Kenaz's last words are: "If the repose of the just after they have died is like this, we must die to the corruptible world so as not to see sins" (28:10).

Deborah

Deborah fascinates commentators because she is a leader, even though she is a woman. True, she does not fight. She needs Barak for that. But Barak is clearly subject to her. In Jdgs. 5, Deborah's words are important. In LAB, those words become still more

important. Deborah becomes a teacher comparable to Moses. Much of her story (chapters 30–33) contains her instruction of the people. God says that she will "enlighten" Israel. This word is used elsewhere in the work mostly with God or Moses as the subject.[23] As in Judges so in LAB, when the people are without a leader, they stray. This is the situation in which God appoints Deborah. The people recognize that their sins cause their current oppression.

Of all the judges, only Deborah is appointed through a direct speech of God.[24] When Deborah becomes leader, she immediately instructs Israel in a long speech. She delivers no such speech in the Bible. Deborah tells of God's deeds for Israel, stressing the giving of the Law. She shows that Israel has disobeyed God whenever they have been without a good leader. She announces that God will come to their aid, not because they deserve it, but because of the covenant God established with their fathers. Deborah has full knowledge of what is to happen. She even quotes Sisera, so she knows what he is thinking (31:1).

Judges does not say explicitly that God's spirit comes upon Deborah. LAB corrects this. In the hymn Deborah and the people sing in LAB 32, Deborah is told to praise God so that the holy spirit will awaken in her and to witness that she saw the stars fighting for Israel. The emphasis throughout the hymn and particularly on the parts concerning Deborah is on witness and praise for God's actions for Israel. As usual in Pseudo-Philo's, the emphasis is not on glorification of the characters, but on God's glorification.

Deborah delivers her final testament in chapter 33. There she is called a "woman of God," a phrase Harrington considers the female counterpart to "man of God."[25] She says that she "enlightens" the people "as one of the female race." Then she says, "Obey me like your mother and heed my words. . . ." Deborah's gender is highlighted here. It is precisely as a woman that she leads Israel. When Deborah dies, the people say, "Behold there has perished a *mother from Israel*, and the holy one who exercised leadership in the house of Jacob" (33:6).

Jael

When Barak proves reluctant to fight Sisera without having Deborah with him, Jdgs. 4 says that for this reason Sisera will be defeated by a woman, Jael. Pseudo-Philo avoids the idea that being defeated by a woman is shameful. Instead he reinforces the idea of moral causality by saying that a woman defeats Sisera because he intended to steal Israelite women (31:1). Pseudo-Philo, influenced by the story of Judith, adds to the biblical story the idea that Jael was beautiful and used her beauty to trap Sisera. This fits the sexual element in the story of Sisera.

The author emphasizes Jael's dependence on God. Jael prays, reminding God of the harm Sisera has done to Israel, and she tells God of her plans. She seeks a sign that God approves of her plans, and it is granted. She later asks for a second sign, which is also granted. There is an implicit contrast with Gideon. Whereas Gideon asks for two signs because he is reluctant to follow God's instructions, Jael seeks assurance that she is acting in accord with God's will, as did Kenaz earlier. The second sign that Jael requests, where she rolls Sisera off the bed without awakening him, is another allusion to Judith's story.

Samuel

Samuel's story also begins with a notice that leadership is lacking in Israel. The people voice their need for a leader like Kenaz to deliver them from distress and say, "It is not appropriate for the people to be without a ruler" (49:1). They then cast lots but are unsuccessful. No one is chosen. They interpret this as God's abandonment of them because of their unworthiness, and they think they must choose their own leader. They are wrong on both counts. Although God occasionally turns a deaf ear to Israel because of its unfaithfulness, he never abandons it. And it is always a mistake for the people to choose their own leader. Nethez, not present in the Bible, insists that Israel trust God and cast lots again. This time the

lot falls on Elkanah, who refuses to become leader. Israel accuses God of neglecting his chosen people. God reacts angrily. He then tells the people that the son of Elkanah's sterile wife will become a prophet. This strengthens Pseudo-Philo's theme that left to itself, Israel makes the wrong choices, and that God sometimes communicates with Israel in unambiguous ways because of Israel's limitations and sinfulness.

There follows the story of Samuel's conception and dedication to the sanctuary. Unlike in the Bible, Eli knows that the one to be born of Hannah will be a prophet (50:8). Later, he tells Hannah that her son is the one for whom the people have prayed and the one "previously promised to the tribes" (51:2). The point is supported when in Hannah's song she says that the psalmist predicted Samuel's coming and associated him with the "priests," Moses and Aaron (Ps. 99:6; LAB 51:6). All of this makes clear that Samuel comes because of God's will and stresses both his prophetic role and connection with Moses. God's initiative is also stressed through the omission of the biblical idea that Hannah promised to dedicate her child to God's service. Samuel is born not because of Hannah, but because God has planned it. The story of Samuel's birth ends with a remarkable scene, not in the Bible, in which the people bring Samuel to Eli with joy: "They stood Samuel before the LORD, anointed him, and said, 'Let the prophet live among the people, and may he be a light to this nation for a long time!'" (51:7).

As with the other good leaders in LAB, Samuel's main task is to convey God's will and judgments to the people. God and Eli have already proclaimed him a prophet, and in Hannah's song, she sings that since Samuel is to born from her, the "ordinance of the Lord" and "the truth" will come through her (50:4). Samuel is to be a light for both Israel and the nations (51:6; see Is. 49:6; 51:4). The words for prophet and prophecy are repeated throughout these chapters.

As in the Bible, Samuel plays a crucial role in the advent of the monarchy. But throughout this story, his dependence on God is never in question. Samuel misunderstands numerous things: he knows nothing at first of his role (52:1), a role of which Eli, Hannah, and the people are aware. Later Eli explains to him his chosenness (53:12), which frightens Samuel (as in the Bible—1 Sam. 3:15, 18); he needs to be instructed by Eli about distinguishing between God and demons (chapter 53; as in the Bible); he is unaware that the ark has been stolen by the Philistines, because God has sent him away; when he finds out about the ark, he thinks it means Israel's destruction, which is untrue; he thinks that God cannot appoint a king "before the time," although God does so; even after his death, when called up by Saul he is confused, thinking it the last judgment. None of this detracts from his stature, however. Rather, it makes him a better example of how humans must defer to God. This attitude is enshrined in Samuel's first words to God, when he receives his first revelation: "If I am capable, speak; for you know more about me (than I do)" (53:7). Samuel is exemplary in that he is always open to God's will, is willing to abandon his own ignorance, never acts out of presumption, and conveys God's word to the people fearlessly.

Samuel begins his prophetic ministry remarkably early in Pseudo-Philo, at the age of eight. Josephus says that he was twelve (*Ant.* 5 § 348), while the Bible leaves his age unstated. Samuel's age is the more remarkable given that God did not approach Moses until he was eighty, according to LAB (53:2). Pseudo-Philo's comparison of Samuel to Moses is high praise.

As in the Bible, Samuel's first prophetic task is unpleasant—the announcement of punishment on Eli's house. While 1 Sam. 3:15 briefly notes Samuel's reluctance to prophesy against Eli's family and 3:17 equally briefly has Eli persuade him, Pseudo-Philo plays up both of these elements. Samuel laments having to prophesy against the one who nourished him and to "prophesy evil as if it were good" (53:11). Eli counters that God foretold Samuel's advent as prophet, that he, Eli, knew that Hannah would bear Samuel, and that God has always guided Samuel. He then orders Samuel to do his duty. Samuel's pain here recalls Moses' reaction to the golden calf earlier.

Pseudo-Philo fabricates an interaction between God and Samuel when God tells him of the theft of the ark (55:1). Again, Samuel is full of distress, and he sounds much like the Ezra of 4 Ezra. He protests that cannot understand the destruction of his people, that he will end his days in sorrow, and that there is no reason to go on living. God assures him that he will rescue the ark, but Samuel objects that the present generation will still suffer. Pseudo-Philo's God offers more satisfaction than does the God of 4 Ezra, for he tells Samuel that he will witness God's vengeance within his lifetime.

When the people approach Samuel to request a king, he knows of God's plan for monarchy, but he knows also that this request comes too early. Therefore, he thinks that is impossible for God to appoint a king now. He thus demonstrates an ironic combination of knowledge and ignorance about God's ways. God tells him that he will appoint a king, but one who will harm the people.

Pseudo-Philo rewrites the story of Saul looking for his father's donkeys so as to stress God's direction of the action. Samuel prays, "Direct your people, Lord, and tell me what you have planned for them" (56:5). He tells Saul that God has chosen him "and has directed all your ways, and your future will also be directed" (56:5). Although God does appoint Saul king, Samuel does not anoint him. This puts Samuel at a greater remove from Saul's kingship than in the Bible. In 57:1, Samuel presents to the people "your king" and says that he is there "as God commanded me." This also distances Samuel from the proceedings. In a key address (57:1–3), Samuel wishes to prove that it is not due to his lack of leadership that the people ask for a king. In the Bible, the people admit that Samuel has done no wrong and that they have sinned in asking for a king. In LAB, they go further, saying that their actions prove that they "are not worthy to be governed by a prophet" (57:4). At the end of the scene, the people and Saul proclaim, "Long live Samuel the prophet!" (57:5). The entire scene establishes prophecy, as embodied in Samuel, as superior to kingship, and it emphasizes Samuel's prophetic role.

In the Bible, there are two versions of why Saul loses God's favor. In one, Saul offers sacrifice without Samuel. In the other, Saul does not execute the Amalekite king Agag after defeating him, nor does he treat all the spoils as *herem*. In the Bible, God reveals Saul's misdeed to Samuel and says he regrets making Saul king. Samuel then castigates Saul. There follows a lengthy interaction between Samuel and Saul in which Samuel actually shows some sympathy for Saul, since once Saul confesses his sin Samuel "turns back" to him while Saul worships. Samuel then slaughters Agag, although God does not explicitly tell him to do so.

Pseudo-Philo rewrites this scene, increasing God's role. LAB 58 chooses the second story of Saul's sin, the one concerning Agag. He lengthens God's speech to Samuel. God accuses Saul of greed, a charge not explicit in the biblical text, and he tells Samuel to allow Agag to be with his wife so that he can produce an heir who will cause Saul harm. He then omits the lengthy interaction between Saul and Samuel. Samuel simply carries out God's judgment. This is made clearer when LAB says that God orders Samuel to kill Agag, a command not recorded in the Bible.

God now tells him that the time has now come to appoint a king. This reinforces the idea that Samuel was right in that Saul's kingship comes too early. As in the Bible, Samuel does not know which of Jesse's sons to anoint. In LAB, God almost taunts Samuel: "Where is your vision that your heart sees? Are you not the one who said to Saul, *'I am the one who sees'?* And why do you not know whom you should anoint? And now this reproach is sufficient for you" (59:2).

Samuel now disappears from the action until his death in 64:1. The Philistines recognize that Samuel's death leaves Israel vulnerable, because it has been protected by the intercession of "Samuel the prophet." As in the Bible, Saul uses a medium to call Samuel up for consultation. LAB places in Samuel's mouth a speech in which he says that God has allowed him to be raised only so that he can pronounce God's judgment on Saul. Since Saul has now sinned a second time, he and his sons will die the following

day. Samuel says that Saul's "jealousy" will result in his losing everything. So Samuel's final appearance emphasizes God's control.

Hannah

As with all the positive characters in LAB, Hannah is a mouthpiece for Pseudo-Philo's views. Her hymn demonstrates knowledge of Samuel's significance. Her role is decreased in ways that enhance God's role. Pseudo-Philo omits her oath to dedicate Samuel to God's service, so that Samuel comes in fulfillment of God's long-standing purpose.

Pseudo-Philo enhances the cruelty of Peninnah and the piety of Hannah. Peninnah says that a woman's beauty and a husband's love are worth nothing, and that the only thing that counts is having children. Ironically, she refers to Rachel and Jacob to make her point. The irony consists in the fact that Hannah resembles Rachel. Both are barren at first, both are beautiful and loved by their husbands, and, later in the story, Hannah is like Rachel in that God gives her a child. Hannah is like Rachel in these ways in the Bible, too, but there Peninnah does not refer to Rachel. Eli attests to Hannah's piety, saying that her conduct is better than that of Peninnah and that is more important than having children (50:3). He generalizes by saying that richness consists not in abundance of children but in abounding "in the will of God" (50:5).

Saul

Saul typifies bad leadership. He ascends the throne only because the people demand it, contrary to God's will. His reign is marked by his "greed" in the case of Agag the Amalekite and his jealousy of David. His removing wizards and mediums from the land is attributed to his desire for fame (64:1). Saul himself testifies to his own wickedness and expresses that hope that his own death will atone for his sins (64:9).

In the Bible, Saul kills himself. In LAB, Saul is killed by the son of Agag, as foretold by God. The fulfillment is acknowledged by Saul (65:4). He then instructs his killer to inform David of his death and to say, "Be not mindful of my hatred or my injustice" (65:5).

The main difference in Saul's portrait in LAB and the Bible is the clearer focus in LAB on Saul's sin through the choice of only one act as responsible for his loss of kingship, the characterization of that act as greed, the explanation that the calling up of Samuel is a second offence, requiring Saul's death, Samuel's condemnations of Saul with respect to greed, using the medium, and jealousy, and Saul's own admissions of his wickedness. The author has made the story a clear example of moral causality.

David

LAB ends with Saul's death and does not recount David's reign. Although Pseudo-Philo is concerned with leadership in Israel, he is not interested in kingship as such or with messianic hope. Several of the leaders in the book are model leaders—Moses, Joshua, Kenaz, Deborah, and Samuel, but they are not kings. The story of Samuel seems to promote prophecy over kingship. But certainly the signs are good for David's rule. His kingship is predicted by God (62:2) and by a spirit possessing Saul (62:2). God predicts David's future victories (59:5). Pseudo-Philo adds a psalm of David acknowledging God's protection and favor (59:4).[26] The song David sings to relieve Saul of his evil spirit evinces a sophisticated knowledge of the origin of demons and predicts Solomon's power over demons, a theme found in other Jewish traditions.

The account of the battle between David and Goliath enhances God's role. David connects the coming battle with God's earlier prediction of victory (61:3; see 59:5). Before killing Goliath, David tells him that their mothers were sisters, Ruth and Orpah, and that while Ruth followed God, Orpah chose the Philistine gods. Then Goliath perceives that David is accompanied by God's angel and declares that his death is not due to David alone. The detail in the Bible that

Saul does not recognize David after the battle is explained by David's association with the angel. Since he has just participated in a joint operation with this superhuman figure, he is transformed, just as Moses was transformed on Sinai and was not recognized by the people. These details reinforce the idea that it is God who conquers Goliath and the Philistines.

Since the book ends abruptly, some speculate that its original ending has been lost. The present ending functions somewhat as does the ending of the gospel of Mark. Both works lay the groundwork for what is to come. In doing so, they challenge their respective communities. For Mark, it is the challenge to take up discipleship and to live it in a more successful way than the first disciples have done. For LAB, it is the challenge to find leaders in the Jewish community that understand the relationship between strong leadership and trust in God. Pseudo-Philo is less concerned that the Davidic monarchy be the form of that leadership than that future leaders follow the example of figures like Moses, Joshua, Kenaz, and Deborah.

Women

Women in Pseudo-Philo appear mainly in a positive light,[27] but it would be too much to say, as some have done, that Pseudo-Philo is a "feminist." That is an anachronism, and it would be too much to claim that Pseudo-Philo has overcome his patriarchal culture. But it is noteworthy that while he might have abbreviated or even deleted Deborah's story, he enhances it, adding considerably to her portrait in Judges. The same is true of his treatment of Jael. Other details of the narrative reinforce the point.

Israel

To the extent that the people of Israel are a composite character in LAB, they are portrayed pessimistically. They act much as they do in the book of Judges. Without a good leader, they go wrong. When they try to choose their own leaders, they also err. And they are prey to bad leaders, as well as to temptations from outside Israel. God frequently displays impatience with them, often wishing to give up on them entirely, were it not for the covenant with the ancestors. Even when they are well-intentioned, the people often err. This is the case, for example, when they react to the pharaoh's wicked plot, or when they devise plans to deal with the crisis at the Red Sea.

Key aspects of Pseudo-Philo's portrait of Israel appear in the story of Kenaz. Kenaz's first act as leader is to discover who is sinning and so preventing Israel from being successful in battle. The episode recalls the Achan episode of Josh. 7. Kenaz's casting of lots determines that there are sinners in every tribe, where in Josh. 7, only one family is guilty. Israel's sins are described generally as not believing in the wonders God has done for Israel (25:6). Many of them are skeptical about the Torah, and some even think that it is an invention of Moses and not truly divine.

God

God is really the main character in LAB.[28] Every character is rewritten to enhance God's role. Pseudo-Philo praises good characters, but mainly insofar as they exemplify subjection to and trust in God. Their main accomplishments are credited to God. This point has been reinforced above, so here the results are simply summarized.

Pseudo-Philo makes few abstract statements about God. God is defined by his action within Israel's history. God frequently speaks in the narrative, and his words in LAB are often not found in the corresponding biblical stories. God gives commands, directs the action, judges the characters' actions, predicts what is to come, and so on. The reader often hears God's thoughts which react to and determine events. Good leaders are dependent on God. Bad leaders inevitably fail. God's plans are never in vain, so to oppose them is to fail. Prophecy proves God's control of history.

LAB examines Israel's history (chapters 1–5 are a prologue to Israel's history) and proves that any oppression or failure it has suffered has been its own fault. God, in every case, has been faithful to Israel and to the covenant. Even when God would have been justified in rejecting Israel, he has never done so. Good leaders often make this point, and the people occasionally admit it. God punishes Israel, but never to the extent of destroying it. So LAB functions as a theodicy. The problem it addresses is not so specific as the destruction of the temple, as in 4 Ezra or 2 Baruch, for example. Rather it is the general situation in first-century Jewish Palestine, where Israel is dominated by foreign powers and must strive for a way to find effective leadership and to remain loyal to God.

Summary

Pseudo-Philo systematically rewrites the Bible to advance his own themes. This is seen clearly in his treatment of biblical figures. He is particularly interested in leadership. A good leader is determined by his or her trust in God. Biblical traits such as courage are prized, but underlying such traits must be a total lack of presumption. Whether the leader goes to war against Israel's enemies is less important than whether he or she depends completely on God not only for the success of specific actions but also for their very conception. When it comes to the internal affairs of Israel, the leader must be a teacher of God's ways and one who constantly reminds the people of their covenantal obligations and of God's faithfulness to them. Pseudo-Philo uses its portrayal of biblical characters to advance other themes as well. Among them are that God's ways are not human ways, moral causality, God's unconditional faithfulness to Israel, disapproval of intermarriage, and so on.

The Bible is consistently rewritten to enhance God's role in the story. Characters are enhanced in ways that demonstrate their trust in and reliance on God. The people of Israel are portrayed somewhat pessimistically, but they are capable of being faithful to God if they have a good leader.

Comparison with Josephus

Feldman has produced several studies of characters in Josephus.[29] From his studies it is clear that Josephus exalts individual characters more than does Pseudo-Philo. In many cases, he provides summaries of a character's traits and accomplishments. Feldman considers this typically Hellenistic. Similar treatments of biblical characters are found in Philo. In contrast, Pseudo-Philo seems interested in characters only insofar as they support the sorts of themes outlined above, such as God's sovereignty and control of history. This is not to say, of course, that Philo and Josephus do not treat such themes, or that Pseudo-Philo is completely uninterested in human characters. But there is a difference of approach between Pseudo-Philo on the one hand and Josephus and Philo on the other. Characterization in Pseudo-Philo remains closer to that of the Hebrew Bible itself. Pseudo-Philo develops themes found in the Bible, and he does so in a way that makes them applicable to his own day.

Frederick J. Murphy

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Notes

[1] Other examples of the genre are Josephus's *Biblical Antiquities, Jubilees,* and the *Genesis Apocryphon.*

[2] For a narrative analysis of the work, see Frederick J. Murphy, *Pseudo-Philo* (New York, 1991).

[3] For more on the traditions Pseudo-Philo uses, see Howard Jacobson, *A Commentary on*

Pseudo-Philo's Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum (Leiden, 1996); M.R. James, *The Biblical Antiquities of Pseudo-Philo* (New York, 1971), especially Louis Feldman's "Prolegomenon" there; Daniel Harrington, *et al.*, *Les Antiquités Bibliques* (Paris, 1996).

[4] See George W.E. Nickelsburg, "Good and Bad Leaders in Pseudo-Philo's *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*," in George W.E. Nickelsburg and John J. Collins, eds., *Ideal Figures in Ancient Judaism* (Chico, 1980), pp. 189–221.

[5] Frederick J. Murphy, "Divine Plan, Human Plan: A Structuring Theme in Pseudo-Philo," in *Jewish Quarterly Review* 77 (1986), pp. 5–14.

[6] Cp., for example, 2 Macc. 6–7.

[7] The translation used here is Daniel J. Harrington, "Pseudo-Philo," in James H. Charlesworth, ed., *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (Garden City, 1985), vol. 2, pp. 297–377. Italics within the quotes indicate text that agrees with some ancient biblical manuscript.

[8] See Frederick J. Murphy, "Retelling the Bible: Idolatry in Pseudo-Philo," in *Journal of Biblical Literature* 107 (1988), pp. 275–287.

[9] The rabbis also justify Tamar's action. See also Jub. 41:23.

[10] Jacobson, p. 412, finds verbal parallels in 1 Sam. 27:12 and Exod. 21:6. He also notes a similarity with Hannah's words regarding Samuel. The midrash parallels Moses and Samuel.

[11] Following Jacobson's suggestion (pp. 412–413) for the sense of *faciam in eis gloriam meam* in 9:7.

[12] Jacobson thinks that these words have been corrupted in transmission.

[13] The word translated "Law" here is actually *superexcellentia*. See Jacobson, pp. 415–417 for alternative translations.

[14] The midrash also connects Gen. 6:3 and Moses; see Jacobson, pp. 417–418.

[15] Note the parallel between God's words to Amram here and the speech to Amram by God in *Ant.* 2 §§ 212–216 (Jacobson, p. 412).

[16] In later Jewish sources, Miriam also has a dream concerning Moses' birth (Jacobson, pp. 417–418). In Josephus, Amram has the dream.

[17] Jacobson (p. 420) cites later Jewish sources to the effect that Moses leads Israel even in the world to come.

[18] There is only one parallel to this, found in the midrash (Jacobson, p. 427).

[19] Jacobson, p. 425.

[20] There are some parallels to this in Jewish tradition (Jacobson, p. 430).

[21] For a full discussion of this story including its parallels in the midrash, see Saul Olyan, "The Israelites Debate Their Options at the Sea of Reeds: *LAB* 10:3, Its Parallels, and Pseudo-Philo's Ideology and Background," in *Journal of Biblical Literature* 110 (1991), pp. 75–91; Murphy, "Divine Plan;" Jacobson, pp. 435–438.

[22] Frederick J. Murphy, "Korah's Rebellion in Pseudo-Philo 16," in Harold W. Attridge, John J. Collins, and Thomas H. Tobin, Jr., eds., *Of Scribes and Scrolls* (New York, 1990), pp. 111–120.

[23] Ibid.

[24] Pieter Willem van der Horst, "Portraits of Biblical Women in Pseudo-Philo's *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*," in *Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha* 5 (1989), p. 34.

[25] "Pseudo-Philo," p. 347.

[26] See John Strugnell, "More Psalms of David," in *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 27 (1965), pp. 207–216. He suggests the psalm comes from a non-canonical collection of David's psalms.

[27] See Cheryl Anne Brown, *No Longer Be Silent* (Louisville, 1992); van der Horst.

[28] See Frederick J. Murphy, "God in Pseudo-Philo," in *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 19 (1988), pp. 1–18.

[29] See, for example, Louis Feldman, "Hellenizations in Josephus' *Jewish Antiquities:* The Portrait of Abraham," in Louis H. Feldman and Gohei Gata, eds., *Josephus, the Bible, and History* (Detroit, 1989), pp. 133–155.

Psychology and Judaism

The title of this essay immediately raises the question of the possible relationship between psychology, imagined to be a universal scientific discipline, and Judaism. How, that is, might a profession usually associated with medicine be affected by religion at all? When we recall that our perceptions of psychology as a scientific discipline are still largely shaped by the methodologies of the natural sciences and medicine,[1] we see that this question is no less relevant today than it would have been in the nineteenth century, when psychology was deemed "the offspring of philosophy and experimental physiology."

We must be clear at the outset, therefore, that the term psychology here does not refer to neuro-physiological parameters that may affect human behavior. Rather, we take up psychology as an idea that guides systems of normative conduct, emanating from one's beliefs about the meaning of life and death. In introducing psychology as a system of ideas affecting behavioral patterns of everyday life, we have in mind not only Jerome Bruner's notion of "folk psychology"

(*Acts of Meaning*, Cambridge, 1990) but also the idea of psychology as a set of culturally shaped Platonic ideas that mold one's world view, nowadays internalized very early in life due to the socializing power of the media. Our underlying assumption is that deeply entrenched beliefs about what makes society and psychological growth possible operate today as Platonic ideas, or metacodes, for interpreting and assigning meanings to life. These codes usually are inculcated through the religio-cultural environment surrounding people during crucial periods of their life.

That events and personal experiences always take on meanings that are socially determined was best argued by Gregory Bateson (*Steps to an Ecology of Mind*, New York, 1972), who equated the processes of interpretation to a telecommunication mechanism. In such a mechanism, a signal is differentiated from noise because the former constitutes an accepted pattern of redundancy that helps the receiver (who recognizes it as a signal only because it is redundant) understand the meaning of the message. The repetitive regularity of a telecommunicative noise turns it into a perceptible, meaningful message, a fact that implies, in turn, that "the concept of redundancy is at least a partial synonym of meaning" (p. 414). Similarly, to make sense of their world, people acquire redundant regularities of meaning from the religious-cultural systems to which they are repetitively exposed. This means that if you scratch the surface of any norm regulating psychology or psychotherapy, you will find behind it a theology or a theosophy that has manifested itself in various secularized norms and interpretations of reality. The result is that, through Max Weber's sociology of religion, which argues that social norms usually are secularized patterns of religious ethics, we may comprehend, for instance, how, in Iranian-Shiite culture, death in a suicidal war can be perceived as a direct path to paradise and as a desirable form of self-actualization. Similarly, by tracing the Calvinist-Protestant work ethos, we can understand the American secular WASP's contrary view that salvation and actualization come only through hard work and that one belongs to the "elect" only if he succeeds materially.

What emerges from this approach is the recognition that there is, in fact, a distinctive psychology of Judaism and that, contrary to the misguided notion of the "Judeo-Christian tradition," we must differentiate between the conventional Christianized psychological norms predominating in the west and the Jewish ethical system. Arthur Cohen points out in *The Myth of the Judeo-Christian Tradition* (New York, 1971, p. XVIII) that, "the Jewish factor in Christian civilization . . . was all but obliterated." It was "reclaimed, rather like a prehensile tail" largely through the fiction that whatever was once Jewish is now Christian, such that Christianity itself constitutes the "larger more sophisticated economy" of the "new Jews." But contrary to this pervasive view, an examination of how the Christianized West was affected in the sixteenth century by Protestant individualism, while Judaism remained highly collective, shows how two essentially different psychological systems emerged.

In this regard Matthew Arnold's classic distinction between Hebraism and Hellenism is pertinent. William Barrett (*Irrational Man*, New York, 1962), who studied Arnold's dichotomizing conceptualizations, explains that the core differences between the two cultures revolve around the phenomenon of "detachment." While, allegedly, "detachment was for the Hebrew an impermissible state of mind, a vice rather than a virtue" (p. 76), Greek philosophy was constructed on the ideal of detachment: "the word 'theory' derives from the Greek verb *theatai* which means . . . to see and is the root of the word theater. At a theater we are spectators of an action in which we ourselves are not involved . . . the man of theory . . . looks upon existence with detachment" (p. 77).

Consequently, we might argue that the contemporary individualistic psychology summed up in the motto "do your own thing" is embedded in a Greco-Christian idea of detachment. By contrast, the still dominant collective Jewish I-Thou doctrine of "Arevim" (bondsmanship), discussed in detail below, which deems each Jew responsible for his brother, is unique and serves as a canonical guide within Jewish institutional life, represented, for instance, in oper-

ations such as Hadassah and the United Jewish Appeal, which take care of and responsibility for Israel.

Before speaking more specifically about the uniquely Jewish psychology, let us better understand how, through a process of apologetic compartmentalization, many Jewish psychologists have disguised the specific Jewish ethic and the distinctive psychological paradigms it created. This apologetic process begins with Freud himself, who, in *Moses & Monotheism* in describing the psychology of the "Oedipal man," posited that human growth is possible only through symbolically killing—that is, detaching oneself from—one's father. This approach continues in the work of contemporary Jewish psychologists (among them orthodox rabbis), who, in their attempts to reconcile Freud's Christianized Oedipal psychology, must apologetically bracket their own Jewish ethical orientation.

Freud, an emancipated nineteenth century Jew, accepted the Hegelian-Marxian idea of progress, which postulated that the world's history develops deterministically through a continuing series of conflicts in which the young and fit *replace* the old, decaying class or nation. In positing his parallel Oedipal theory, Freud explicitly understood that the religion of the new "Pauline Oedipal" son *replaced* the religion of the old Mosaic father, now to be considered a fossil (pp. 109, 111, 113, 175). In portraying psychoanalysis as an unavoidable confrontation with one's "Oedipal original sin"—the guilt of killing and replacing the old unfit father—Freud argued:

> Paul, a Roman Jew from Tarsus, seized upon this feeling of guilt. . . . This he called original sin: it was a crime against God. . . . In reality this crime . . . has been the murder of the Father. . . . Paul, by developing the Jewish religion further became its destroyer. . . . Christianity marked a progress in history. . . . From now on, the Jewish religion was, so to speak, a fossil. . . . The way in which the new religion came to terms with the ancient ambivalency in the father-son relationship is noteworthy. . . . The fate of having to displace the father it could not escape.

Deeming this process of Oedipal development to be universal, Freud repeatedly stated that "it is the fate of all of us to direct our . . . first hatred and our first murderous wish against our father" (*Complete Psychological Works*, Vol. 4, London, p. 262).

Two patterns of detachment emerge clearly from Freud's Oedipal psychology and from western individualism at large:

1) the Hegelian-Marxian intergenerational detachment following from Freud's developmental theory of Oedipal growth, and
2) the interpersonal theory of Darwinian egoistic detachment via the process of survival of the fittest, which may be recognized today as the psychology of detachment that says, "Do your own thing."

To illuminate how these doctrines impinge on Jewish psychological formulations, we turn to two cases involving a contemporary Orthodox psychologist. Through these examples we shall see how reconciling Freud with Judaism leads to a distorting of the unique Jewish psychology of *teshuva* (repentance) and, moreover, blurs the differences between the western notion of an ego-centered psychological Darwinism and the Jewish collective psychology of bondsmanship, referred to above, which recognizes the possibility of self actualization in helping the other (alter-centrism).

The Freudian psychologist Moshe Spero, an Orthodox Jew, describes his treatment of a *Baal-Teshuva*—a secular Jew who came to accept Orthodox religious beliefs and practices—who identified with the Talmudic rabbis Aqiba and Resh Laqish.[2] The former, who started his studies at the age of 40 years, gave the newly observant Jew the hope that he might still be able to master the intricacies of Talmud study; the latter was a fitting model because he became a known Talmudic scholar even though he once was a highway gangster. Spero (p. 152), probably one of the most prolific writers in Jewish psychology, reports proudly that instead of fostering this man's identification with these Talmudic heroes, whom Spero denounced as folkloristic figures, he helped him succeed "over the course of several months" to excavate his "deeply suppressed hate for his parents."

In a second case,[3] Spero attempted to reconcile the Jewish notion of bondsmanship,

which refers to a condition under which "the *arev*-bond undertakes almost completely the role and obligations of the other" with the psychoanalytic process of "transference." The problem is that, by superimposing apologetically the Jewish communal notion of bondsmanship on the individualistic process of psychoanalytic "transference," the *collective, egalitarian* idea of mutuality inherent in bondsmanship is distorted. Transference refers by definition to a non-egalitarian process in which a powerful psychoanalyst uses his "knowledge" (as Michel Foucault indicated) to control, or, better, to manipulate, the analy-sand to take responsibility for his or her unconscious "resistance:" projections and sexual attraction toward the analyst. The state of bondsmanship, by contrast, especially in the common Talmudic notion that "All of Israel are bonded to (and so responsible for) each other" (B. San. 27b), refers to the egalitarian notion of unconditional mutual responsibility that each Jew has for his or her fellow. To be sure, in transference the psychoanalyst undertakes an overall measure of responsibility for the total psychotherapeutic process. But transference, in which an analysand is manipulated to accept the analyst's interpretations of his or her unconscious drives (because, after all, laymen are unable to decipher the language of the unconscious), constitutes an apologetic and cynical reduction of the *communal* psychology of the Jewish doctrine of bondsmanship.

Paradoxical Dialogues in Midrashic Interpretation

Contrary to this apologetic trend, in which Jewish psychologists bracket their Jewish commitments and attempt to prove that the Jewish heritage illustrates Freudian ideas, it is possible to trace to the Rabbinic system of midrashic exegesis the roots of the contrary, pluralistic-democratic idea of freedom to choose one's own interpretation of life and worldly events. A definitive account of how this psycho-philosophical principle of dialogic co-existence derives from the midrashic system of hermeneutic pluralism is in order.

Diverse hermeneutic systems take different stands on the ability of a single datum to support more than one meaning. Some psychological hermeneutics adhere to a *dialectic* either/or principle, which finds it necessary to replace a false interpretation that is eliminated with the one true explanation that has been identified. In *dialogic* systems, by contrast, two interpretations may co-exist. The first, Aristotelian either/or system is embedded in the idea of conflict; the hyphen in the dialogic principle of paradox, on the other hand, is rooted in the Platonic or Buberian I-thou idea, according to which truth stands between two co-existing, alternating or even opposing positions.

Interestingly, this principle of paradoxical interpretations stands at the foundation of many ideas central to Judaism. These ideas include the notions, for instance, that God's *midat hadin* (quality of rigorous sternness) and *midat harachamim* (quality of merciful compassion) co-exist. At the very heart of Rabbinic Judaism, indeed, stands the concept of the written and oral Torahs, both revealed by God even though, prima facie, their texts seem sometimes to contradict each other. In interpreting canonical documents, the principle of paradoxical interpretations is further invoked, for instance, to explain the fact that, while the written Torah often specifies the death penalty, the oral Torah condemns as murderous any Jewish court that carries out this penalty even once in seventy years (B. Mak. 7a).

Even as it was used to comprehend contradictions between the oral and written Torahs, so the principle of paradoxical interpretations applied in the resolution of apparent contradictions within the written Torah itself. A classic example is the verse, "And the Lord God said, it is not good that the man should be alone, I will make him a help against him" (Gen. 2:18). Gen. Rab. 17:3 explains the two seemingly contradictory concepts, "help" and "against," by applying a hermeneutic principle that reads them independently of each other. The woman will become man's right-hand "help" if he deserves it; but if he does not deserve it, she will turn "against" him. A similar interpretation makes Israel's deservingness of future redemption dependent on the free-

dom of choice to do good or evil. Here the two contradicting words *beita achishena* (Is. 60:22), which mean literally "I shall hasten it" (*achishena*) and "in its due time" (*beita*), were also read independently (Song Rab. 8:12) to mean: redemption will occur in due time if Israel does not deserve it (*beita*); but if they deserve salvation, I will hasten it (*achishena*).

This principle of paradoxical interpretations stands in opposition to "double bind" theories,[4] which postulate that socialization via "double messages" may lead to psychotic breakdowns. By contrast, we refer to the Midrashic principle of "*Al-tikrei*," which means literally "don't read," and is a catchphrase for the full sentence, "Don't read (the biblical text) as it is written, but, by switching or changing the letters, read it in a different way to reveal an alternate meaning." The relevance of this paradoxical principle in the present context is that it entails the possibility of retaining two contradictory interpretations of a textual passage. This hermeneutic, which has extensive psychological implications, appears about 180 times in the Rabbinic literature,[5] and some of its occurrences, in prayers and/or turned into popular slogans, remarkably affected socialization of Jews throughout the ages.

One of the most famous uses of the *al-tikrei* passages, recited by traditional Jews daily in the morning prayers, refers to Is. 54:13: "All your sons shall be taught by the Lord, and great shall be the peace of your sons." Concerning this verse, B. Ber. 64 says, "Do not read 'your sons' (*banayich*) but 'your builders' (*bonayich*)." Thus, while Isaiah states that peace shall be brought upon the Israelites' children ("sons") in general, the Talmud rereads his words to refer to "your builders" in particular, thus establishing a distinct ethical imperative to participate in the rebuilding of the Jewish nation.

In our current discussion, at issue is whether this mode of interpretation intends completely to replace and erase the original textual reading or only to add to it another level of meaning. Judah Eisenstein, editor of the *Otzar Yisrael* encyclopedia, answers this question by noting that both Maimonides and Nachmanides stressed that such formulations add an alternative interpretation to the biblical text but do not negate the original reading. Indeed, Nachmanides held that the hermeneutic idea inherent in the "*al-tikrei*" form allows even two *contradictory* interpretations both to be true. This is possible insofar as the biblical text is sufficiently powerful to endure both meanings. It is, accordingly, exactly the possibility of such an alternative that creates what I have termed a dialogic, or alternating, hermeneutic system. The reading "your builders" does not replace dialectically the original words, "your children." The new reading, rather, facilitates the dialogic possibility of accumulative progress, according to which "your children" become "your progressing developers."

Having posited that this ancient midrashic system of hermeneutic pluralism possibly comprised the bedrock of the democratic notion of dialogic co-existence, we may proceed now to introduce four different psychological dimensions, the first two entailing a time element and the subsequent two relating to space. The four subtitles, formulated in a comparative style, are articulated as four systems of psychological dialogues that people usually maintain on various levels with their surrounding environment:

1. *The intergenerational psychology of Abraham's binding of his son, Isaac ("Aqeda")*: Here the possibility of maintaining a total personal identity by rearranging the intergenerational continuity between the "Abrahams" and "Isaacs" will be compared to the Oedipal psychology of intergenerational conflict.
2. *The intrapersonal psychology of return to Judaism ("Teshuva")*: In this section the possibility of recomposing one's failing past according to the idea of repentance will be compared to the deterministic linear time conception of one's past that follows from the concept of "original sin."
3. *The interpersonal psychology of bondsmanship ("Arevim")*: In this section the communal idea of self-actualization via helping the other (alter-centrism) will be discussed by comparing it to the ego-centered actualization psychology of Darwinian Survival of the Fittest.
4. *The superpersonal psychology of "PaRDeS"*: This section discusses two dialogical levels: a) the hermeneutic notion of *PaRDeS* which provides a dialogical bridge between the rational-physical world and

> one's irrational-mystical world, and b) the dialogical system of sexuality, which provides a bridge for regulating the flow of energy between the *yetzer* (carnal desire) and the *yetzira* (spiritual creativity).

We discuss each of these psychological paradigms in turn.

The Intergenerational Psychology of Abraham's Binding of His Son, Isaac ("Aqeda")

While not oblivious to the universal phenomenon of intergenerational tension, based on the story of Abraham's binding of this son Isaac, the Jewish *Aqeda* psychology nonetheless assumes that maintaining a consistent total identity depends at least partially on people's ability to reconnect their life story to their ancestral roots. This is hardly to say that Jewish Oedipal tales, as well as Biblical and Talmudic interpretations, evaded the phenomenological possibility of intergenerational tension, including the presumed incestual drive; they clearly did not. Of interest to us here, rather, is the differential pattern of the proposed religio-cultural *solution* Judaism offered to this intergenerational tension.

Since the Oedipal psychology of intergenerational detachment appears to be congruent with the Hegelian Marxist idea of progress via conflict that can be resolved only by eliminating the old unfitting father, nation or class, the neo-Freudian scenario of psychotherapeutic patricide follows. As a result, the approach taken in the following excerpt from Fritz Perls' Gestaltist therapeutic dream analysis (*Gestalt Therapy Verbatim*, Lafayette, 1969, pp. 221–222) seems not an exception but the rule in most neo-Freudian therapies (F = therapist; J = patient):

> F: So find somebody else to kill . . .
> J: My mother . . . how can I kill her? I want it to hurt. . . . Oh! I killed her. . . . Into the swimming pool, all filled with acid, and she dove in. There's nothing left. . . . You deserved it. I should have done it a long time ago. There aren't even any bones left. She just disappeared. . . . And then I sorta felt *good*. I should have done it a long time ago.
> F: Say this to the group.
> J: It felt good! I should have done it *a long* time ago.

One need not be a professional therapist in order to realize that the therapist's encouragement of this thirty-five year old patient to "say this to the group" is geared to help her to kill her mother symbolically and publicly in order to become "healthy" by separating from her according to the prescribed individualistic Western-American social norm of "detachment."

Since the idea that psychological or psychotherapeutic growth is possible only via patricide permeates most western theories of personality, it is interesting to compare this idea, available in various versions of the classic Oedipal myth, with Isaac myths. For though it appears that most of the thematic elements comprising the Oedipal myth were quite popular in medieval tales and fables, these stories are quite different from those presented from a Jewish point of view. In the Greek Oedipal myth and the Judas Iscariot legend,[6] the sons (Oedipus and Judah) marry their mothers, who according to some versions even bear their children. In various Jewish Oedipal myths, by contrast, the consummation of the incestuous relations is miraculously prevented at the last moment. Let us follow the sequence of events in a medieval legend about the biblical Joshua, son of Nun (see *Rav Pealim*, 1894):

> The father of Joshua lived in Jerusalem, and his wife was childless, and this righteous man was praying in the presence of his wife, and God listened to him. And it was so that while she was pregnant, this righteous man tormented himself and weeped day and night non-stop; and this was bad in the eyes of his wife, and she said to him: you should have been happy because God listened to your prayers . . . and he told her . . . that he was told from Heaven that this son that will be born to him will decapitate him. . . . And it was so that when she gave birth and it was a son and his mother took for him a basket (ark) . . . and she put the child in it and she threw it into the river (Nile), and God arranged for a big fish (whale) to swallow the basked. . . . And it was the day when the king made a feast for his ministers and slaves and he caught this fish . . . and opened it and there was a boy crying . . . and the boy grew up in the king's palace and he made him the hangman. . . . And after these things this

> righteous man (Joshua's father) sinned against the king of Egypt and the king ordered the hangman to decapitate him and take his wife, sons and property to himself, as was customary those days. And as he approached his mother to copulate with her, then the whole bed filled up with milk from her breasts. And he became very alarmed, and he took a spear to kill her, because he thought that she was a witch, but his mother remembered the words of his father, the late righteous man, and she answered him saying: it is not witch-craft but the milk with which I nursed you, because I am your mother, and she told him the whole event, and he immediately separated from her . . . as he did not know that it was his father, and he repented . . . and followed Moses our Rabbi blessed be his memory (p. 23).

Notably, in many non-Jewish medieval versions of the Oedipal myth, the father-killing theme is entirely lacking, and the incestuous marrying of the mother ends in a dialogic rearranging continuity. An example is the famous Gregory legend, in which the son, after discovering that he is married to his mother, not only repents but is allowed to become Pope (see *Gesta Romanorum*, 1891). The fact that Freud, nonetheless, chose the patricidal Oedipal myth as a key narrative for the construction of his dialectic paradigm of growth and progress demonstrates that it was not only the incest theme but its concomitant theme of patricide that Freud believed characterized human development.

Again, while in the famous medieval legend about Pope Gregory, an incestuous relationship between mother and son is actually enacted, in the Jewish version of this tale, which appears in various anthologies under the title *Mamzer Talmid Chacham* ("The Talmudic Scholar Bastard"), the actual consummation of the incestuous relationship is prevented at the last moment, as happened in the fable concerning Joshua. In one version for example:[7]

> the husband sat and heard the whole story, and he was utterly startled: it became clearly known to him that this woman was his mother . . . and (he) gave praise and gratitude to God, for bestowing upon him great charity, so that he did not commit such a grave sin as to depend sexually on his mother.

Nonetheless, as alluded to earlier, it is not the denial of the intergenerational tension—including the incestual drive—that characterizes Jewish socializing dicta. Rather, the focus of those dicta is the need to overcome this natural trend. Indeed, B. Shab. 130a states:

> It was taught: R. Simeon b. Gamaliel said: "Every precept that [the Israelites] accepted with joy, e.g. circumcision . . . they still observe with joy. But every precept that they accepted with displeasure, e.g. the forbidden degrees of consanguinity [incest] . . . they still perform with strife [quarrel]."

Even commentators such as the famous *Maharal of Prague* (see *Chidushey Agadot Hamaharal*, part 1) note that it is natural for people to be sexually attracted to their immediate kin. It appears, therefore, that only the Hegelian theme of progress via patricidal replacement is distinctive in the story of Oedipus.

It further is clear that Freud chose the patricidal story of Oedipus as his paradigmatic narrative even though he was familiar with Judah's legend, which was cited by his student Otto Rank. Similarly, he most probably was acquainted with Pope Gregory's legend, about whom Thomas Mann wrote his famous novel, *The Holy Sinner*. It seems, rather, that the focus upon the Oedipus story, which includes the patricidal element, reflects Freud's desire to create an emancipated "Godless" universal psychology of personal development, which concurs with Hegel's dialectic idea of progress via replacement.

Furthermore, it is important to point out evidence showing that the dialogical norm of intergenerational continuity was known already in ancient midrashic texts and fostered in the Jewish tradition. Emphasizing how Israel's anti-incestuous nature differed from the dialectic mode of progress of gentile nations, the ancient (first or second century) Midrash Tanhuma (Vayeshev) stated:

> Why did the Scripture engage in writing their [the gentiles'] genealogy . . . except . . . to publicize that they are all the children of incest. And so it says: "The sons of El'phaz: Teman, Omar, Zephi, Gatam, Kenaz, Timna, and Am'alek" (1 Chron. 1:36) and [in the Torah it says], "Timna was a concubine of El'iphaz" (Gen. 36:12). It teaches us that [Elifas] married his daughter . . . and later it says [about someone else's genealogy], "Ana the son of Zivon. . . ." This

> teaches that Zivon copulated with his mother, and she gave birth to Ana so that he was his brother and son. . . . But God brought Israel close to him . . . as it is written, "Yet I had planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed" (Jer. 2:21).

To understand how an appropriate resolution to intergenerational tensions was consistently inculcated in Jews, we now may examine the "*Aqeda*" paradox. The *Aqeda* is presented in most Jewish texts as a Kierkegaardian test of faith, meant to condition Jewish "Isaacs" stubbornly to retain faith in the biblical promise of dialogic continuity with Abraham, "even when a sharp sword is laid upon their neck" (B. Ber. 10a).

With this theory of dialogic continuity of progress in mind, we may understand why, on the one hand, even those rare interpretative texts that depict Isaac as having been killed report that he subsequently was brought back to life,[8] while, on the other hand, massive child sacrifice, modeled by the *Aqeda*, was relatively permissible only during the Middle Ages, when, for instance, Jewish continuity was concretely threatened by the Crusaders' coercion of Jewish children to convert to Christianity.

What we have then are two models of progress:

1. the dialectic paradigm, in which the idealization of the actual filicidal killing-sacrificing of the son-Jesus may trigger progress via the actual Oedipal elimination of the father-generation, so that the son rules *instead* of the father;
2. the dialogic paradigm that idealizes Isaac's "patricidal" faith in a last-minute avoidance of Abraham's "filicidal" pressure to facilitate continuity of the son's ruling *after* the father.

In conclusion, let us emphasize that the recomposition of total identities by using the *Aqeda* theme to reestablish intergenerational continuity has been used successfully by many psychotherapists and educators.

The Intrapersonal Psychology of Return to Judaism ("Teshuva")

This inner time dimension purports to encounter the cyclistic meta-code of *teshuva* with the deterministic linear intrapersonal time dimension of the "original sin" meta-code. Concurrent with the intergenerational time dimension inherent in the *Aqeda* psychology, the *teshuva* meta-code begins from the assumption that in order to maintain a coherent total identity, people need a normative system for re-biographing or recomposing their past failures so that they may be linked into a personal life-story with which they can live. Thus, if people have internalized the Christian "original sin" meta-code, which, according to Ricoeur (*The Conflict of Interpretation*, Evanston, 1981, p. 269), represents "a hereditary vice" and "an original guilt," then this "Oedipal guilt" cannot be shaken off. However, if people internalize a belief in the cyclistic *teshuva* (repentance) meta-code, which means literally "turning," then they may reinterpret their past failures so that their life story will be recomposed into a new resonant melody. But how does this cyclistic possibility for recomposing life-stories emerge from a Jewish psycho-philosophy, which the *teshuva* psychology presumably epitomizes? One of the most quoted socializing statements about the possibility of *teshuva* is cited in the name of Resh Laqish, who prior to becoming a major Talmudic sage was allegedly a highway gangster. He asserts that "repentance (*teshuva*) is so great that premeditated sins are accounted as though they are merits" (B. Yoma 86b).

Prima facie the translation of this Talmudic assertion into psychotherapeutic terms would mean that from a curative-rehabilitative perspective, a person who experienced failures may declare that he "hopes to have a good past in the future." Having been reared to think in Western, historically based terms, we would probably dismiss such a declaration as senseless, because we were taught to believe that our past is a closed book. Accordingly, we train our ex-criminals or ex-mental patients to redeem themselves either in a present based on a "here and now" existential salvation or in a "not yet here and not yet now" futuristic "clean leaf " rehabilitation scheme, asking them, in essence, to erase or accept their unchangeable failing past. By advocating such rehabilitation formulas, however, we rarely come to full terms with the problem of whether

and how people are really capable of trading or integrating their old "Mr. Hyde" selves with reborn, "clean leaf, Dr. Jekyl" ones.

In essence the question is why Western people must hide their past failings. Why should we not be able to correct our past in order either to bridge the cognitive gap that separates the amnestic death of that failing past from an existential "here and now" rebirth, or to minimize the "cognitive dissonance" brought about by the psychoanalytic confrontation between our conscious, guiltful past and our neurotic present? Indeed, by examining the possibility of rehabilitation within the political sphere, we may learn that powerful people are rarely satisfied with a "clean leaf" schema that allows them only to do their best in the future without erasing the possible social stigma that they incurred in their doubtful past. Consequently, we feel sympathetic to such people if they demand a re-reading of their failed past. Similarly, in concluding his study about federal witnesses whose past life and identity had to be buried and erased in order to protect them from potential revengers, Fred Montanino stated:[9]

> the witnesses' protection experience tells us that . . . we construct reality from the world around us, and past life and interaction are essential parts of this construction. . . . The protected witness experience teaches us further that . . . we cannot escape responsibility for our own past performance, nor can we easily assume a rightful place in collective social life without some recognition of it. We cannot totally divorce ourselves from others who have been part of our social life without losing the part from which we seek to divorce them.

Thus, the dialectic divorce from past identity, be it criminal or "schizophrenic," advocated by the "new leaf" rehabilitation formula seems insufficient and even unworkable when examined through such extreme cases as Protected Federal Witnesses or degraded political personalities seeking rehabilitation.

Accordingly, Resh Laqish's statement about *teshuva* must be understood as a Talmudic effort to institutionalize a social-cultural norm by which repenters will not merely be given a new chance from now on but will be granted full "biographic rehabilitation," actually being permitted to correct, re-interpret, or assign new meaning to their past failures. Otherwise, it would be impossible for premeditated sins committed in the *past* retroactively to be "accounted as merits."

This psychology for recomposing one's failing life history would seem inconceivable if it did not derive its normative social legitimation from a canonical system of hermeneutic tradition. Indeed, a careful examination of Talmudic and midrashic interpretative methods reveals that this is precisely how biographies of Biblical sinners are retroactively recomposed. While the Rabbinic literature provides abundant examples of rebiographing, here I introduce by way of example only the classic case of King David.

David's Adulterous Sin

The story is related succinctly at 2 Sam. 11:3–4: "And David sent and inquired about the woman. And one said, "Is not this Bathshe'ba, the daughter of Eli'am, the wife of Uri'ah the Hittite? And David sent messengers and took her; and she came in unto him, and he lay with her." But while the Biblical description is straightforward in describing David's sin of adultery, B. Shab. 56a offers an initial revisioning of the episode:

> R. Samuel the son of Nahman said in the name of Jonathan: "Whoever maintains that David sinned is nothing but mistaken; for it is written, 'And David behaved himself wisely in all his ways, and the Lord was with him' (1 Sam. 18:14). Is it possible that sin came to his hand, yet the Divine Presence was with him?"

The Talmud reconciles this seeming contradiction by offering a rereading of another biblical verse: "Then how do I interpret [the verse], 'Why have you [David] despised the word of the Lord, to do what is evil in his sight?' (2 Sam. 12:9)." The Talmud concludes that, "David only wished or intended to do evil [adultery] but actually didn't:"

> Rab observed: Rabbi, who is descended from David, seeks to defend him and [so reads 2 Sam. 12:9 in] reverse in David's favor. [Thus] the "evil" [mentioned] here is unlike every other "evil" [mentioned] elsewhere in

> the Torah. For of every other evil in the Torah it is written "and he did," whereas here it is written "to do;" [this means] that he desired to do, but did not.

In presenting this creative rereading, the Talmud does not hesitate to admit that Rabbi's familial loyalty ("who is descended from David") contributed to his willingness to interpret the verse in David's favor. Yet the very subtle distinction between the intention or desire to do evil and the evils that were actually committed is an important step in David's rehabilitation.

Interestingly while the notion that there was only intention to do evil appears here as a mitigating reinterpretation of what the Bible presents as an actual sin, matters are not so simple as this at all. Rather, the midrashic re-biographing of David epitomizes the infinite possibilities inherent in a hermeneutic multiple-choice system. This is clear since, according to a much cited Talmudic dictum (B. Yom. 29a), formulating the "intention" to sin is worse than actually sinning. To reconcile this apparent problem, in interpreting the continuation of 2 Sam. 12:9, B. Shab. 56a states the following:

> "You have smitten Uri'ah the Hittite with the sword:" you should have had him tried by the Sanhedrin but did not. "And have taken his wife to be your wife:" you have marriage rights in her, for . . . everyone who went out in the wars of the house of David wrote a bill of divorce for his wife.

This passage reflects the Talmudic principle that "there is no early and no late in the Torah" (B. Pes. 6b), everything having been conceived in God's mind at the same time and revealed together at Sinai. Otherwise it would be impossible to claim that the Talmudic dictum that soldiers must deposit a tentative writ of divorce before going into battle (to avoid unresolved widowhood) was already known and followed during David's time. The impact of this reading is to claim that there was neither sin nor even intention to sin.

As in most other cases, the Talmud and the Midrash use David's subsequent full repentance as a pivotal point to begin to reverse, via various hermeneutic methods, the meaning of David's earlier sins, so that it becomes possible to present him retrospectively as a perfect role model for other prospective repenters. Indeed, along these lines, one passage states (Shocher Tov, Tehilim 51): "This is what David said to God, '. . . if you accept me, all criminals will make up with you, and everybody will look to me, and I shall testify that you accept repenters.'"

Thus, the *hermetic* approach to the past embedded in the Christianized "original sin" meta-code and the *hermeneutic* approach to the past rooted in the midrashic *teshuwa* meta-code produce two diametrically opposed psychological systems. The linear conception of the past constitutes a *hermetic* inner time perspective, while the *hermeneutic* orientation to one's past emanates from a cyclistic orientation concerning one's intrapersonal rehabilitative recomposition of his past.

To be sure, according to the *hermetic* model, reinterpretation of the past is possible. It differs however from the open *hermeneutic* paradigm in that it allows only one fundamentalistic, predetermined interpretation. For example, the psychoanalytic psychologist Roy Schafer (*The Analytic Attitude*, New York, 1983, pp. 219–224) describes openly how he manipulates his analy-sands to accept only one reinterpretation of the past, grounded in the "sex-aggression" cause inherent in the "Oedipal original sin" meta-code:

> The analyst's retellings progressively influence the what and the how of the stories told by analysands. . . . The analyst slowly and patiently develops an emphasis on infantile or archaic modes of sexual and aggressive action.

Moreover, by stressing that in contrast to the *hermetic* conception of the past only the *hermeneutic* perception of past failures allows "re-biographing," one should not be misled to believe that biographic recomposition of one's past is possible without behavioral changes in the present. Rather, the first step in the sequence of re-biographing is repentance in a specific present. This is a prerequisite for re-composing the past, which can be only a second step.

The story of Jacob's sons' callous selling of their brother Joseph (Gen. 37:18–28) serves as a good case in point. What first appeared to be a sinful act subsequently was rein-

terpreted by Joseph himself, who assured his brothers retroactively, "As for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today" (Gen. 50:20). As step no. 1 in this process of re-biographing, Joseph subjected his brothers to the severest test of repentance, their ability to resist the same temptation to sell or turn in a brother even when circumstances seemed to demand and warrant it. This was the case when presumably only Benjamin had sinned by stealing Joseph's cup, leading Joseph to declare, "Only the man in whose hand the cup was found shall be my slave; but as for you, go up in peace to your father." (Gen. 44:17). Only after his brothers withstood the test of "absolute repentance"[10] did Joseph use retrospective reinterpretation, step no. 2, to rehabilitate his brother's, asserting, "God meant it for good."

Indeed, in a series of studies of Israeli exconvicts who became repenters (*baalei teshuva*), interviewees frequently used the midrashic reinterpretation method to indicate how their behavioral change in the present allowed them to recompose their past. One repenter said: "I want to remember this [criminal] period in my life so that I shall be reminded from where I came and to where I was able to go, from a low pit to a high roof." Another noted: "I don't have to forget my past. . . . Out of bitterness came forth sweetness."

In the first citation, the famous Talmudic slogan "from a high roof to a low pit" (B. Hag. 5b), which refers to a disgraceful fall from a highly respectable position, was reversed and rephrased to depict "ascent through descent." In the second citation, Judg. 14:14—"from the strong came forth sweetness"—was paraphrased by inserting the word *bitterness* in place of the word *strong*. Likewise, using this method of recomposing life stories in psychotherapy was found to help people to reestablish a comprehensive biographical identity with which they could better live. In one case, a patient's frequent visits with his mother previously had been interpreted as inappropriate dependency; the recomposition process re-biographed these visits as favorable efforts to honor the mother. In another case, a mother's voluntary devotion to taking care of a sick, lonely woman was perceived by her daughter as a testimony to her own being neglected by that mother; the process of retroactive recomposition facilitated her perceiving of her mother's conduct as an appropriate "role-modeling" act.

In conclusion, since a similar pattern of successful recompositions of failing life stories was noticed when people suffering from mental disturbances adopted the cyclistic meta-code inherent in *teshuva* psychology, it appears that the Midrash provides a reversed law of causality. Indeed, the late J.B. Soloveitchick, a leading authority in Jewish philosophy and law, appears to state this unequivocally (*The Halakhic Man*, Philadelphia, 1983, pp. 114–115):

> the law of causality, from this perspective, also assumes a new form. The future imprints its stamp on the past and determines its image. . . . The cause is interpreted by the affect, moment *a* by moment *b*. The past itself is indeterminate. . . . It is only the present and the future that can pry it open and read its meaning. . . . The main principal of repentance is that the future dominates the past and then reigns over it in unbounded fashion.

At the heart of repentance, as we have seen, thus is not the forgetting of the past but the ability to recompose the past so as to use it in constructing a better future.

The Interpersonal Psychology of Bondsmanship ("Arevim")

The communal dimension of the motto "Kol Yisrael arevim ze baze" ("all the people of Israel are sureties one for another," B. B.Q. 92a) shifts individuals' focus from psychological time to their interaction with their psycho-social surrounding. The idea of "Arevim," which puts the *other* (alter) in the center, constitutes a diametric opposition to the ego-centered "do your own thing" psychology that emanates from the Darwinian concept of the survival of the fittest. Accordingly, a clear distinction can be made between the *ego-centered* psychology emanating from the Protestant self-actualizing-salvation ethic

and the Jewish psychology that follows from the *alter-centered* "Arevim" ethic of self actualizing-salvation through the other. For generations, accordingly, Talmudic imperatives such as "one who solicits mercy for his fellow while he himself is in need of the same thing will be answered first" (B. Shav. 39a) have expressed the Jewish attitude towards communal welfare.

It is possible to demonstrate how the alter-centered "Arevim" psychology was systematically inculcated from the tribal structure that functioned during ancient times, continued in the interpersonal psychology that facilitated the survival of Hasidic communities, and appears still in such contemporary voluntary associations as Hadassah or the United Jewish Appeal. To be sure, the interpersonal "Arevim" psychology of alter-centered actualization is not to be confused with a collectivizing psychology such as comprised communism. While it has been claimed that in collectivizing systems the individuality of the self may be undermined, in the interpersonal psychology inherent in the "Arevim" system, the self—the "I"—is never obliterated but retains a dialogical position *vis a vis* the "thou" through a process that may be termed "reciprocal-individualism."

The crux of reciprocal-individualism, the desire to facilitate alter-centered actualization in the "Arevim" community where people are *different* from each other but not *indifferent* to each other, was used by the philosopher Hugo Bergman (*Dialogical Philosophy*, Jerusalem, 1974, pp. 247–248) to explicate the differences between the Hegelian dialectic principle and Buber's I-thou philosophy: "It is worthwhile to compare the dialogical principle and the dialectic principle of Hegel . . . [for] Hegel's synthesis swallows . . . the thesis and the antithesis into a more engulfing synthesis . . . [whereas] this is not so among those dialogic philosophers, according to whom the engulfment really preserves both." In this way, the "I" remains "I" and the "thou" remains a "thou." But what are the ideological-theosophical roots of the alter-centered "Arevim" psychology?

To apprehend the historical components of Jewish alter-centrism, it seems useful to consider the dynamics of give and take. In his introduction to the Zohar, Ashlag explains how the human desire to receive divine influx would be impossible without perceiving God's equal or even greater desire, even his need, to give or bestow holiness on the human world. Similarly, according to Hasidic ethics, the best context for actualizing the pleasure one may derive through interpersonal giving is relationships involving education or love. In such relationships, self-fulfillment is meaningless until the interacting partner provides the proper feedback to indicate that the message was fully received and perceived. To visualize how two unequal partners (child and father, student and teacher) can fully convey what they feel or think only through narrowing and contracting the matter or theme to be conveyed, one may use the "funnel" metaphor provided by the Maggid of Mezeritz (*Maggid Devarav Le-Yaacov*, Lublin, 1927, p. 47), the successor of the Besht, the founder of the eighteenth century Hasidic movement:

> When the Rabbi wants his student to understand his broad mind, and the student cannot apprehend it then the Rabbi-teacher contracts his mind in talk and letters. For example, when a person wants to pour from one container to another and he is afraid to spill, then he takes an instrument called a funnel, and by this the liquid is contracted . . . and he will not spill. So it is when the Rabbi's mind is contracted in talk and letters which he says to the student, and through this the student can apprehend the teacher's broad mind.

Thus, contraction is a prerequisite to alter-centered revelation—giving—in the human and divine worlds. Divine contraction as a precondition for emanation is best illuminated in Buber's poetic words (*Bepardes Hachasidut*, Tel Aviv, 1963, p. 104):

> How could the divine infinite (*eyn-sof*) become a contracted God which roams the worlds to carry out His creation through acts of contraction? . . . Why did the infinite divine, as an absolute personality, visa-vis stand nothing, become a personality which stands visa-vis a receiver? . . . [It is] because of the desire to find a receiver, so that the divine will be able to bestow His light upon it.

Following the above it appears that western ego-centered "do-your-own-thing" psychology encompasses a basic misunderstanding of the need to give. The kabbalistic analogy

of God's need to give or to bestow may be understood on a human level by picturing an artist's incurable need to "give" the pictures he paints. One may imagine that if an artist were locked up for life in his studio to paint as much as he desired but that no human eye was permitted to glance at his work, he would eventually die or attempt suicide. Consider the self-endangering risks anti-establishment writers are willing to take in totalitarian states when they distribute underground copies of their work.

Self-actualization thus would be largely self-defeating if it culminated in a simplistic psychology of "doing my own thing." If I follow literally the "democratic" imperative of "doing my own thing as long as I do not hurt others," those others might still hurt me by obstructing "my own actualizing thing," for instance, if they refuse to receive what I want to give as an expression of my self-actualization. In this sense, then, the line between giving and receiving becomes considerably blurred, with giving becoming *ipso facto* receiving. Indeed, reception theory,[11] which shifted focus from studying the text and its author to assessing the role of the reader, suggests by its very definition that if there would be no reader to receive the author's writing ("giving"), his text would be quite meaningless. Similarly, the declarations "I am a therapist!" or "I am a teacher!" would be rather meaningless if there were no one to receive the therapy or the teaching. Giving, in this dialogic sense, is not a unilateral altruistic act of good Samaritanism but a reciprocal process of mutual dependency: A might be willing to receive B's actualizing-giving under the condition that B or C is willing to receive A's actualizing-giving.

Now, if reciprocal-individualism, which concurs with Buber's I-thou stance, stands neither for massifying collectivism (in which one runs away from one's self into the mob) nor for isolating ego-centered individualism (in which one runs away from the mob), how are we to envision the interpersonal "Arevim" psychology of egalitarian or balanced give and take? One model can be referred to as the Zebulun and Issachar exchange contract.

The Zebulun and Issachar Exchange Contract

The earliest sources concerning the contract between the tribes Issachar and Zebulun are the legends and commentary that evolved around the biblical descriptions of these two tribal brothers. The first elements of the legend were based on Jacob's blessings of his sons ("Zebulun shall dwell at the haven of the sea; and he shall be a haven of ships. . . . Issachar is a strong ass crouching down between two burdens;" Gen. 49:13–14) and Moses' blessings of the tribes ("of Zebulun he said, 'Rejoice, Zebulun, in thy going out; and Issachar, in thy tents;'" Deut. 33:18).

In the Talmudic period of the second to fifth centuries C.E., Zebulun was described as a merchant, and Issachar's burden and tents were described as the burden and tents of Torah. The fact that Zebulun was mentioned first in both blessings, although he was younger than Issachar, gave birth to the famous interpretation that Zebulun and Issachar made a partnership. Zebulun dwells at the haven of the sea and goes out sailing with his merchandise and earns and gives into the mouth of Issachar, who sits and studies the Torah. Zebulun came before Issachar, since Issachar's Torah was due to Zebulun (Rashi on Deut. 33:18). From a historical point of view it is of interest to stress that, in spite of some evidence indicating that Zebulun was indeed a sea merchant and Issachar a judge, it was a legend, gradually transformed into an ideology, that was translated into a contractual and contractional tradition instructing the rich (not necessarily of the tribe of Zebulun or sea merchants) to purchase their salvation by supporting poor Talmudic scholars.[12]

To lead the reader directly to our major paradigmatic case study, let us skip now from the Talmudic period to eighteenth century Hasidic culture to demonstrate how the Issachar and Zebulun model was revived in Hasidic spiritual-material terms as an alter-centered contract model.

According to Yaacov Yosef (*Toldot Yaacov Yosef*, Jerusalem, 1963), the student and friend of the Besht, early Hasidim used the doctrine of "form" and "matter" strictly to

reestablish the alter-centered contractional relationship that prevailed between Issachar and Zebulun. Indeed, according to him, an exchange system should prevail between Issacharian form and Zebulunian matter on the *inter*personal and the *intra*personal levels. Hence, he stresses (p. 243):

> Since similar to the individuality within one person, the soul and form are not to feel superior over the body and say that it is a holy soul, . . . and even more so the body is not to be arrogant over the soul as it holds the soul . . . as they need each other like a man and a woman, each one being half a body—so it is in the collective, the Talmudic scholars and righteous are not to say that there is no need for the masses, since they support the Torah, . . . and even more so the masses are not to say there is no need for Talmudic scholars, or to feel arrogant against them since their livelihood is due to them, . . . and so, each one is half and with both together, matter and form whether in the collective or within the individual, it becomes one full person.

The interpersonal "Arevim" psychology exposes the *futility* of the equality myth that is predicated only on one materialistic salvation ideal as compared to the apparent *utility* of a social structure with a multiple (Zebulun and Issachar) actualization system. The difference between the Protestant-Darwinian ego-centered salvation psychology and the alter-centered Zebulun and Issachar actualizing exchange system distinguishes accordingly between multiple *roads* to one salvation ideal and multiple *modes* of actualization.

Nonetheless, by tracing the roots of the Zebulun and Issachar interpersonal exchange system, one may realize that the "Arevim" paradigm also comprises an organic socio-psychological theory. Accordingly, the Hasidic notion of organic interdependency between matter and form (body and soul), which portrays for example the "people of matter" as the congregation's feet and the "people of form" as its eyes, seems to concur with Emile Durkheim's conception of modern society in the terms of organic solidarity between various functional sections (organs).

In socio-psychological terms, this organic interdependence may be conceptualized as a two directional process, leading both outside the self and inside the self. Accordingly, the *Zaddik* ("righteous teacher") may reach the other by going outward to meet that other on the other's level or by going inward to correct his own self, because, in light of the organic "Arevim" principle, the process of "*tikun*" (self correction) includes correction of the other.

While reaching out on the other's level constitutes today a popular dictum in various practice theories adhering to the postulates of group dynamics, it is interesting to note that this principle was formulated already in the eighteenth century as a canonical imperative of Hasidic ethics. This is expressed in Nahman of Bratzlav's parable of the "indic" (turkey),[13] used nowadays as a classic metaphor for psychotherapeutic oriented groups geared to enhancing human relations. The parable, which speaks of a prince who believed himself to be a turkey and so sat naked under a table and ate only sunflower seeds, is as follows:

> While all the doctors hired by his father, the king, could not cure the prince, there was one wise man who got also undressed, sat with the prince under the table, introduced himself as a turkey, and ate sunflower seeds until the prince found it strange that a wise man should behave in such a fashion. Thus they both decided that turkeys could dress, eat other food, etc., and finally both came out from under the table and behaved like humans again.

The symbolic alter-centered idea of uplifting the other by going down to his level is quite clear in this parable and is conveyed in the very idea that the *Zaddik* must go down to reach the masses by telling them simple allegoric stories. But let us turn now to the more radical "Arevim" principle of "tikkun," which posits the possibility of changing the other's conduct via self correction.

Although the Hasidic imperative of *tikkun* refers primarily to the human capacity and obligation to correct the divine disorder caused during the primordial "breaking of the vessels," it entails also self-correction. Thus the Besht (*Keter Shem Tov*, Jerusalem, 1975, p. 21) states, "If a person had the opportunity to observe a transgression and he should feel [the need] to correct him-

self . . . then he will bring back the wicked person after he includes him through unification." Upon initial consideration of this imperative, one may wonder why the *a*normative behavior of the other should be casually related to the same *a*normative behavior in myself, and, further, how should *my* correction of this particular behavior simultaneously correct the other's behavior? To understand this process we should distinguish between the one-directional "copying" model of Albert Bandura or between the passive, reflective, looking glass metaphor of Charles Cooley and George Herbert Mead,[14] and the double-mirror model of the Besht. While Bandura construes the possibility of "identification" as one-way role-modeling or "copying" and while, in the Meadian looking-glass model, the self evolves from a social mirroring process, there are no assumptions as to whether and how a role-taker (the one who looks at the social mirror) or the copier affects the significant other's or model's behavior in an interactive situation. However, the double-mirroring paradigm, which may be termed the Beshtian mutual-emulating scheme, proposes a reflective process of double-mirroring, in which both interacting partners are affected simultaneously. The active-dynamic double-mirror concept assumes that if my interacting partner persistently repeats a certain kind of *a*normative behavior, then my performance in regard to this specific behavior must have been similarly *a*normative or insufficiently normative and persistent to serve its reflective modeling purpose. My correction of this behavior should reverse the process, for unlike modeling, emulation is a two-directional mirroring process. Indeed, Yaacov Yosef (p. 259) interprets the verse "who is a wise man? He who learns from everybody" (M. Ab. 4:1) by using the mirror metaphor (about two hundred years before Charles Cooley) by noting: "A wise man is the one who learns from everybody like someone that looks in the mirror and knows his own faults by seeing the faults of his fellow man."

A common example of such mutual self-correction is when a teacher suddenly lowers his voice to bring attention to the fact that both he and his students have been shouting over one another's heads. A similar example involves a parent who notices a child eating in an unmannerly way while important guests are present. Rather than reprimand the child in front of the visitors, the parent corrects his or her own eating habits in the hope that the child will emulate that behavior. Mutual-emulation via double-mirroring, by contrast, occurs in a case, for instance, in which a father or politician preaches observance of rules such as traffic laws or honest reporting of one's income. If the child or follower indeed corrects his driving or tax reporting, the father or politician may in turn be forced to adhere to his own preaching and to correct a second time a behavior that, at first, he may not in fact have been that concerned about at all.

Indeed, in a research project that compared various clinical supervision methods in family psychotherapy it was found that therapists' self-corrections (enacted according to instructions received via earphones) were enhanced (corrected twice) when the person treated improved his conduct via emulation that functioned as a mirror for the therapist.

The Superpersonal "PaRDeS" Psychology

If a consensus could be established that at one time or another, and especially during periods of crisis and uncontrollable predicaments, all people have a need to communicate with the transcendental world of metaphysics, then the ecstatic experience should be conceived as the major means for bridging the natural and the super-natural worlds. The term *ex-stasis*, meaning to stand outside oneself, is known among students of mysticism as *unio mystica*, which refers to an effort of the soul to depart from the body in order to unite with a higher divine entity.

Since the process of the soul's departure from the body encompasses on the one hand the human perception of the death experience while on the other hand it comprises a state of exaltation, our discussion of the superpersonal dimension will be divided into two sections:

a) The first will present the Jewish "PaR-DeS" as a psychological bridge between people's material-rational world of *Peshat* ("surface meaning") and the mystic-irrational language of the Kabbalistic *Sod* (mystical meaning), which may help them to deal with unexpected calamities and their fear of death.
b) The second section introduces the ecstatic bridge between the energy producing *yetzer* (sexual drive) and the super-material state of *yetzira* (spiritual creativity), which encompasses the mental experience of attaining the muse or the exuberant feeling of romantic love.

Together, these two sections concern the preventative-immunizing aspect of dealing with the irrational fear of death or inexplicable personal predicaments and the possibility of reaching ineffable elated experiences of mental inspirations.

Ecstasy for Experiencing Mystic "Sod"

To present the Jewish concept of "PaRDeS" (which will be explained below) as a psychological bridge between the rational-material world and the irrational supernatural world of the unknown, let us pose the following rhetorical questions: If Max Weber is correct that since the rise of Protestantism in the sixteenth century we are witnessing in the West the gradual predominance of rational, calculated thinking as a sole criteria and evidence for salvation and divine election, then is it not plausible that socialization would aim to inculcate only the language of rationality? Likewise, if Michel Foucault (*Madness and Civilization*, New York, 1967, p. X) is correct that until the Renaissance "madness and non-madness, reason and non-reason are inextricably involved: inseparable," while "the end of the eighteenth century affords the evidence of a broken dialogue . . . in which the exchange between madness and monologue of reason about madness has been established only on the basis of such a silence," then has not Protestantism indeed banned the irrational thought system? Consequently, if Western Protestantism has excluded the mystic-irrational language from its text, what happens to people's eternal irrational fears of the transcendental unknown and the unexpected unrationalizable predicaments that will forever haunt people in our "imperfect world," as Weber posited?

Now, since ecstatic-mysticism was not banned by Jews, Eastern Shamanists, and pre-Protestant Westerners, our next query could be the nature of the Jewish impact, if any, on conceptions of the ecstatic *unio mystica* experience, which was perceived as the attempt of the soul to depart from the body. To begin with, it is of interest to point out that Michael Screech (*Erasmus: Ecstasy and the Praise of Folly*, London, 1988, p. 49), for example, who studied Erasmus' classic pre-Protestant *Praise of Folly*, stresses that "for centuries before Erasmus, ecstasy had come to mean the state of a Christian who had been raptured outside himself, his soul 'leaving his body' in the process." Screech emphasizes nonetheless that Christian notions of ecstasy owe their understanding not only to Platonic thought but also to Jewish scholars, such as the first century philosopher Philo, whose writings were highly influential in shaping the Greco-Western formulations of ecstasy. One example, Philo's interpretation of God's "leading Abraham outside" (Who is the Heir 76–85), will suffice:

> He led him outside and said "Look up into heaven" (Gen. 15:5). . . . [He led him] outside of the prison-houses of the body, of the lairs where the senses lurk, of the sophistries of the deceitful word and thought; above all He led him out of himself, out of the belief that he thought and apprehended through intelligence which acknowledged no other authority and owed no allegiance to any other than itself.

Following the brief accounts of the nature of ecstatic *unio mystica*, construction of a theory that construes ecstasy as a psychological bridge between the natural and the super-natural worlds could be accomplished only by using rational terms to expound irrational experiences, such as fear of death, because our present psychological orientation is by definition rational. Accordingly, the analogy of the immunization procedure against physical epidemics may be applied to portray ecstatic exercises as immunizations against the fear of death on the metaphysical level.

Thus, if the prescription against the possible contraction of a disease in the physical world requires the introjection of small doses of bacteria, which are presumed to cause a specific disease so that the human organism will develop natural antibodies against the illness under consideration, the same process may be envisioned on a metaphysical level. If ecstatic *unio mystica* is perceived in experiential terms that simulate the death experience, during which the soul presumably leaves the body, then the experiencing of doses of "temporary death" may be perceived as an immunization against the fear of permanent death. On a clinical level this means a reversal of a principle practiced by behavioral therapists. Instead of asking people to accompany an imagined experience of phobia with relaxation exercises, they are instructed to experience a guided state of ecstasy following their imagined fear of death simulation. Indeed, in *Dialogue with Deviance*, my study of the psychosocial dynamics of kabbalistic Hasidism, I interpret the famous Hasidic notion of descent for the sake of ascent as a desensitizing immunization device. I suggest, accordingly, that one may understand Hasidic normative prescriptions as instructions for overcoming depression or the feeling of failure. Thus the Besht states, for example, that the verse "'There is no righteous man on earth who will do good without sinning' (Eccl. 7:20) [means] that when a person does only good the evil impulse seduces him, whereas when the evil impulse realizes that he has in him a part of the evil inclination, he will leave him alone." The prescription against the disease of temptation described by the Besht is thus portrayed as a straightforward immunization manual that may be read as follows: Consume or inject a small dose of germs (e.g., anti-evil impulse germs) that cause the disease that threatens to contaminate you, and your organism will develop natural antibodies against the illness under consideration.

Moreover, the kabbalistic-Hasidic immunization model may be expanded now to include a variety of irrational experiences. Thus, acquiring the irrational language of mystic *Sod* may be instrumental in preventing permanent psychotic detachments from reality. If individuals encounter stress, disaster, or manic joy, for instance, they need not be overly alarmed if they are allowed to understand their resultant experiences (delusions or hearing voices) either in the rational language of reason or in the mystic language of unreason, which they learned to master in the course of their socialization.

Nonetheless, a Cartesian linguistic model will be of little help to the modern person unless a linking dimension is available to enable the bridging between such rational and irrational thought systems. This linking dimension may be found in the Jewish multifaceted interpretative system known as PaRDeS. The etymological history of the concept PaRDeS is insignificant, but it is important to know that the term refers generally to the concept that the Torah and other sacred texts may be interpreted on four levels or, rather, according to four different thought systems: P*(eshat)* ("simple") stands for the simple, straightforward, literal and rational meaning of a verse, which could be understood as going by the written letter. R*(emez)* ("implication") refers to the philosophical truth inherent in an allegoric or symbolic meaning of a word, derived either by reading the word or several words as an abbreviation of other words, by breaking a word into its constituent elements, or by recombining the letters of the word into a new word in order to derive a new meaning. D*(erash)* ("search," "interpret") refers to the narrative and ethical interpretation of a word or paragraph by using an analogic story and parable or by using any other method that activates the imagination to expand, broaden, or change the meaning of the text according to traditional midrashic methods. S*(od)* ("secret") refers to specific texts that include mystical-irrational interpretations of the scripture according to prestructured paradigms as outlined, for instance, in Kabbalistic books. For our psychotherapeutic purposes, PaRDeS may be conceived as a threefold scheme in which one may incorporate *remez* under the general heading of *derash*, because, on the one hand, it means literally "hint or allusion," which pertains to mystic *sod*, and, on the other hand, in actual usage it comprises specific narrative and hermeneutic techniques.

From the present psychological perspective, let us demonstrate that, by incorporating the mystic language of *Sod* as a normative interpretation outlet, the "PaRDeS" provides a psychotherapeutic bridge between the rational and irrational worlds. In practical terms this means that if a frightened person rushes to a psychotherapist because he or she heard the voice of or was persecuted by Satan, the therapist could say, "Relax! You will not be excommunicated as a schizophrenic, for we have a normative bridging system that legitimizes the alternating use of the rational *Peshat* interpretation and the mystical*Sod* language." Accordingly, this therapist might then proceed to help our frightened "patient" by using Job's dialogue with God, which ended in God's justifying and compensating Job, or by using kabbalistic or midrashic paradigms for normalizing the hearing of voices.

The predominate efforts to use ecstatic and other mystical experiences appear to have been geared towards energizing and nourishing the mind. A classical case involves Joseph Karo, the sixteenth-century author of the monumental Jewish legal code book, the *Shulchan Aruch*, who communicated with an angel, called by him the *Maggid*, apparently in order to energize his intellectual system. However, insofar as Abraham Abulafia, the thirteenth-century father of ecstatic mysticism, advocated the use of *devekut* (the Hebrew term for *unio mystica*) for attaining prophecy by portraying this ecstatic experience in erotic terms, this is the place for moving to our final account of how sexual ecstasy may function as an energizing bridge for reaching superpersonal spirituality.

Ecstasy for Reaching Spiritual Creativity

Michael Screech (p. XVII) has already indicated "how powerful a contribution Plato had made to the doctrines of ecstasy with his teachings in the *Phaedrus* about the divine forms of madness which produce prophets, poets and lovers." Plato's all embracing observation that ecstasy produces prophets, poets, and lovers may in fact be understood as the natural other side of perceiving ecstasy in terms of an immunizing procedure against the fear of death. If by consuming "temporary death" in small doses one learns to control the fear of a permanent death, then it is only logical that the sexual act, which produces life, may be attained via a similar ecstatic experience.

The notion that *devekut* (*unio mystica*) represents two opposites—a temporary death and the life producing experience of sexual ecstasy—might now be better understood by considering how the Kabbalah tackled the affinity between life and death. In the kabbalistic literature the idea of death by a kiss (*mitat neshika*) is so taken for granted and deeply established that it does not require further qualification and documentation. Indeed, in the kabbalistic literature, the soul's departure from the body, which occurs in the process of dying, is often termed life (*chayim*), and consequently the ecstatic experiences of sexual orgasm and "dying" appear almost as synonymous terms, because both are described in the anthropomorphic terms of the sexual union. As a matter of fact, the first reference in the Torah to the term *devekut* as a verb explicates the natural drive for matrimonial sexuality: "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave (*vedavak*) unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (Gen. 2:24). Hence, the prescribed sexual cleaving (*vedavak*) unto one's wife entails also the idea of separation and union according to the biblical command to "be one flesh," which concurs with the required procedure for attaining *unio mystica* or *devekut*. Thus, the soul's separation from the body or man's separation from his parents in order to cleave to his wife or to God symbolize the meeting point between life and death.

The enigmatic declaration "love is strong as death" (Cant. 8:6) thus may be better understood by interpreting it in light of another statement, "But ye that did cleave unto the Lord . . . are alive" (Deut. 4:4), suggesting that those who know the secret of cleaving (*devekut*) know the secret of life. Sigmund Freud was accordingly on the right track in signifying the sexual drive as a pivotal life producing parameter. It seems doubtful however whether the physician Freud succeeded in breaking open the chains imposed on him by the nineteenth century's over emphasis on the natural sciences in

order to incorporate also the spiritual dimension emanating from the sexual energy.

One need only to follow Freud's own definition of neurosis as a mechanical disability to discharge the tension reducing sexual drive to realize that he defined sexuality exclusively in motoric instinctual terms. When Freud (*General Psychological Theory*, New York, 1963, p. 180) states that "the . . . neuroses . . . came about by sexual instinctual impulses being rejected" and when he subsequently adds (p. 186), "All our analyses go to show that the . . . neuroses originate from the ego's refusing to accept a powerful instinctual impulse existing in the *id* and denying it motor discharge" (p. 186), he reflects an unequivocally narrow physiological model of sexuality.

It seems needless to reiterate here what has been claimed so often, that according to Freud's narrow instinctual theory of sexuality, spiritual creativity must be understood as a gloomy sublimated neurotic result of one's incapacity to satisfy his tension reducing need for sexual discharge. Silvano Arieti (*Creativity: The Magic Synthesis*, New York, 1976, p. 22), an internationally recognized authority on psychopathology, has for example attacked Freud's formulation of creativity as follows:

> The concept of sublimation or diversion of sexual energy from the original aim plays an important role in Freud's concept of creativity. Thus, when sexual energy is not spent in the proper sexual activity, it is displaced and invested in pursuits, like the creative, which do not seem to be related to sex. The creative person is a frustrated individual who cannot find fulfillment in sexual gratification or other aspects of life and who therefore attempts to find it in creativity. In contrast to Freud's view, however, the biographies of many gifted people who also had a rich sexual life seem to contradict such assumptions.

Concomitant with Arieti's position, Anthony Storr (*The Dynamics of Creation*, Tel Aviv, 1983) cites a psychoanalytic study that describes Van Gogh's creativity as an attempt to sublimate his conflicting inner torments that presumably evolved from his compulsive masturbation and frustrated sexuality. Consequently, Storr asks ironically whether we would have lost Van Gogh's artistic contribution if he would have gone through a successful process of psychoanalysis.

Although Freud's theory of sexuality is intricate, from the present perspective it is significant that he joined with other western scholars who pointed a blaming finger at the Christian religion as the "bedrock" for western neurotic repressed and oppressed sexuality. Since Judaism as such never repressed sexuality or spiritual mysticism, our focus on the *yetzer-yetzira* sequence as a broader sexual paradigm that incorporates the possibility for reaching super natural ecstatic creativity becomes highly significant.

While the Jewish psycho-philosophy of sexuality is complex, a brief presentation will suffice to demonstrate how the physical sexual drive, *yetzer*, may nourish the spiritual creative *yetzira*. Etymologically, the Hebrew words *yetzer*, referring to the physical drive or sexual impulse, and *yetzira*, literally meaning creation and creativity, are derived from the same root. It is, however, the multiple use of this term that demonstrates how the sexual physical union provides a structural model for the broader union between the *yetzer* and the *yetzira*. Thus, the word *zur*, which means rock or hard stone, is linked to the word *zura*, meaning *form*, in a way that comprises the essence of the relationships that, according to the philosophers, are to prevail between form and matter.

In *The Guide of the Perplexed*, the twelfth century Jewish philosopher Maimonides used, for example, a passage from Isaiah to indicate how the sexual union must be understood as a paradigm for the broader creative notions associated with the terms *form* and *matter*. Isaiah stated: "Look unto the rock [*zur*] from which you were hown, and to the quarry from which you were digged. Look to Abraham your father and to Sarah who bore you" (Is. 51:1–2).

Because the term *zur* is also used as a verb, *yatzar* (to form), we find also at Is. 43:7 a reference to God's creation of the human species: "And whom I have created for my glory, if have formed [*yetzartiv*] him, yea, I have made him." Accordingly, David Bakan's conclusion (*Maimonides on Prophecy*, Northvale, 1991) appears plausible that, in order to understand the sexual that is brought to mind as an allegory of a greater principle, "Maimonides thus seeks . . . to raise

it to being a matter of the relationship between form and matter, with Abraham contributing the form, and Sarah contributing the matter" (p. 84). If we add the terms *yetzur*, referring to the human being, and the term *zir*, meaning pivot, we have indeed an all-engulfing model of creativity that unifies the physical and spiritual under the roof of one term. A person needs his or her *yetzer*, the drive that he or she may use freely and willingly as a *zir* (pivot) for infinite possibilities of *yetzira* (spiritual creativity or *ziyur* [painting]), for without these components he or she is not a *yetzur*—a human being.

Indeed, a classical aphorism that urges people to keep their sexual drive alive is cited in the name of the late thirteenth century Kabbalist Isaac of Acre, who declared that "a person who does not desire [or who has not longed for] a woman is lower than a *chamor* [donkey]."[15] The word *chamor* symbolizes *chomer*—that is, materiality—and the implication is that such a person lacks the spiritual component of desire. This antirepressive imperative, claimed Isaac of Acre, is only the first step in reaching the level of spiritual creativity. To inculcate how the sexual desire of *yetzer* may be channeled, he used the popular tale about a street corner idler whose desire for a princess he saw coming out of a bathhouse turned into spiritual passion. More specifically, when the idler attempted a pass at the princess, she responded by stating, "In the cemetery that thing will take place." Accordingly, the idler's experience of desire while waiting in the cemetery for the princess who never showed up turned presumably into spiritual passion.

Thus, the idea that the *yetzer* as "physical desire" (*cheshek gufani*) should be neither repressed nor fully expressed but contracted so that the *yetzira*, "spiritual desire" (*cheshek ruchani*), may expand became practically a folk psychology that for hundreds of years exerted its canonical impact on all Jewish and some non-Jewish ethical systems. The *yetzer-yetzira* sequence was inculcated to keep the *yetzer* alive by popular teachings such as one that emphasizes that, "were it not for the *yetzer hara* (evil), a person would not build a house and would not marry, procreate, and . . . deal in business" (Gen. Rab. 9:7).

Its psychotherapeutic applicability may be recognized in such cases as that of Mr. E.,[16] a lawyer diagnosed as a schizophrenic, who was able to maintain a steady job by interpreting his revived sexual fantasies as spiritual energizers. Thus, the *yetzer* as an energizer for the spiritual *yetzira* concurs with the Kabbalistic idea that emotional-ecstatic activities should nourish and enhance the intellectual-spiritual possibility of creativity but never control it.

Conclusion

The semantic association between the physical *yetzer* and the spiritual *yetzira* epitomizes the essence of the Jewish psycho-philosophy that is grounded in a search for a dialogical co-existence between matter and form. While the terms *yetzer, devekut, daat* (copulating and knowing), *mila* (phallus and word), and *arel* (uncircumcised) encompass both the sexual-physical and the spiritual-metaphysical reality, this dialogic relationship refers to all four psychological dimensions presented in this essay.

Accordingly, a coherent total identity may be reestablished by reorganizing the psychological co-existence between one's incorporeal past (ancestors and auto-biography) and one's corporeal present. And likewise the psychological well being may be maintained via the interpersonal co-existence between the material *Zebuluns* and the spiritual *Isaachars* much the same as the *yetzer-yetzira* continuum may preserve the intrapersonal balance between carnality and spirituality.

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NOTES

[1] See C.S. Hall and G. Lindzey, *Theories of Personality* (New York, 1970), p. 4.

[2] "The Use of Folklore as a Developmental Phenomenon in Nouveau-Orthodox Religions," in *The American Journal of Psychoanalysis* 42(2), 1982, pp. 149–158.

[3] M. Spero, *Religious Objects as Psychological Structures* (Chicago, 1992), p. 111.

[4] See G. Bateson, *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*, New York, 1972.

[5] M. Zipor, "*Al gilguleyhen shel derashat 'Al-tikrei*,'" in Y. Refael, ed., *Yovel Sinai* (Jerusalem, 1987).

[6] The latter, according to Otto Rank's much neglected important work on the incest theme (1912), "was declared by most researchers as the Christian interpretation (formulation) of the Oedipus fable" (p. 143). It appears in Jacobus de Voragine's *Golden Legend* (1941).

[7] M. Ben Yechezkel, *Sefer Hamasiot*, vol. 4 (Tel-Aviv, 1951).

[8] S. Shpiegel, "*Meagadot Haaqeda*," in *Sefer Hayovel Le A. Marks* (New York, 1950).

[9] "Protecting the Federal Witness," in *American Behavioral Scientist* 27(4), 1984, pp. 501–528.

[10] Maimonides, *Teshuva* 2:1, applies this designation to circumstances in which, even given the opportunity, one does not again sin as one previously had.

[11] See W. Iser, *The Act of Reading* (Baltimore, 1978).

[12] See M. Beer, "Issachar and Zebulun" in *Bar-Ilan Year Book* (Ramat Gan, 1968).

[13] See M. Rotenberg, *Dialogue with Deviance* (Philadelphia, 1983), p. 124.

[14] See A. Bandura, *Principles of Behavior Modification* (New York, 1969) and C.H. Cooley, *Human Nature and Social Order* (New York, 1902).

[15] Quoted in Pierkarz, *The Beginning of Hasidism* (Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, 1978), p. 209.

[16] See M. Rotenberg, *Dia-Logo Therapy: Psychonarration and PaRDeS* (New York, 1991) and *The "Yetzer": A Kabalistic Psychology of Eroticism and Human Sexuality* (Northvale, 1997).

Purity and Impurity in Judaism

IN Classical Judaism, purity (*tohorah*) and uncleanness (*tum'ah*) carry forward Pentateuchal commandments that the holy people, Israel, when eating, procreating, and worshiping God in the Temple, is to avoid certain sources of contamination. The principal one of these is the corpse (Num. 19). Lev. 11, further, catalogues foods that are clean and those that are unclean; Israelites eat the former, not the latter. Lev. 12 goes over the uncleanness that results from childbirth; Lev. 13–14 deal with a skin-ailment that Scripture deems analogous to the condition of the corpse; and Lev. 15 discusses the uncleanness of the woman in her menstrual period and analogous uncleanness brought about by excretions other than in the menstrual period of a woman and counterpart excretions from the flaccid penis.

In the Pentateuch uncleanness affects the conduct of three activities: eating, procreation, and attendance at the Temple. When the priests ate their priestly rations, they were to do so in a condition of cultic cleanness. Furthermore, all Israelites were to abstain from unclean foods and from sexual relations during a woman's menstrual period or when affected by the uncleanness of the sexual organs to which Lev. 15 makes allusion. All Israelites also were to become clean to participate in the Temple cult, which would affect many at the time of the pilgrim festivals, Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles. In addition, among the Judaisms that flourished before 70 C.E. when the Temple was destroyed, some groups, such as the Pharisees, the Essenes, and some represented by law codes found in the Dead Sea Scrolls, kept the rules of cultic purity in eating food at home, not in the Temple, a practice that did not characterize the bulk of the communities of Judaism. After 70, when attaining cleanness to participate in the cult no longer pertained, uncleanness-rules governing food and sexual relations continued to apply, as they do in Judaism to the present day. But in matters of public worship it was the Temple, not the synagogue, to which considerations of cleanness pertained, and no one would refrain from

attending synagogue worship by reason of having contracted uncleanness, e.g., having attended a funeral and so contracted corpse-uncleanness.

The Mishnah, ca. 200 C.E., the principal legal document of Judaism beyond Scripture, greatly amplifies the definition of what is affected by uncleanness, how uncleanness is transmitted, and the way in which uncleanness is removed. The Mishnah's Division of Purities treats the interplay of persons, food, and liquids. Dry inanimate objects or food are not susceptible to uncleanness (Lev. 11:34, 37). But what is wet is susceptible, so that liquids activate the system. What is unclean, moreover, emerges from uncleanness through the operation of liquids, specifically, through immersion in fit water of requisite volume and in natural condition. Liquids thus also deactivate the system, with water in its natural condition concluding the process by removing uncleanness. The uncleanness of persons, furthermore, is signified by body liquids or flux in the case of the menstruating woman (Niddah) and the *Zab* (Zabim). Corpse uncleanness is conceived to be a kind of effluent, a viscous gas, which flows like a liquid. Utensils for their part receive uncleanness when they form receptacles able to contain liquid. So the invisible flow of fluid-like substances or powers serves to put food, drink, and receptacles into the status of uncleanness and to remove those things from that status. Thus, in material terms, the effect of liquid is upon food, drink, utensils, and humans. The consequence has to do with who may eat and drink what food and liquid and what food and drink may be consumed in which pots and pans. These loci are specified by tractates on utensils (Kelim) and on food and drink (Tohorot and Uqsin).

In Judaism, overall, what is unclean is abnormal and disruptive of the economy of nature, and what is clean is normal and constitutive of the economy and the wholeness of nature. What is unclean is restored to a condition of cleanness through the activity of nature, unimpeded by human intervention, in removing the uncleanness, through the natural force of water collected in its original state. Accordingly, if to be clean is normal, then it is that state of normality that is restored by natural processes themselves. So to be unclean is abnormal and is the result of what was deemed to be unnatural processes: death, menstrual blood, flux of blood outside of the menstrual cycle, and a flow from the penis outside of the normal reproductive process. Procreation and sustenance of life define what is at stake in the condition of cleanness, en route to the state of sanctification, as in the hierarchical statement of Pinhas b. Yair at M. Sot. 9:15:

> R. Pinhas b. Yair says, "Heedfulness leads to cleanliness, cleanliness leads to cleanness, cleanness leads to abstinence [*perishut*, a.k.a., Pharisaism], abstinence leads to holiness, holiness leads to modesty, modesty leads to the fear of sin, the fear of sin leads to piety, piety leads to the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit leads to the resurrection of the dead, and the resurrection of the dead comes through Elijah, blessed be his memory, Amen."

Uncleanness and sanctification form opposites, because the one stands for death, the other, the predisposition, the preparation, for eternal life.

The Impurity of Bodily Excretions

In the halakhah of the Oral Torah we deal with semen or vaginal blood that cannot carry out the purpose that by nature the one or the other realizes, which is participation in the process of procreating life. Such non-productive semen, such vaginal flow outside of the normal cycle of procreation—these violate their own innate teleology. They do so on their own, not by man's or woman's intervention. Of such violations of the natural law and the purposive definition of the media of procreation, the Israelite has to take heed. Man or woman cannot generate by an act of deliberation an unclean body fluid, whether genital semen or genital blood, which is deemed unclean only if it flows naturally, nor can they form by an act of will a source of uncleanness represented by the corpse or the dead creeping thing. Were we to simplify matters and say, as to what contracts uncleanness, humanity disposes, but as to what imparts uncleanness, nature imposes, we should not be far off the mark.

Of the animate sources of uncleanness,

the person afflicted with the skin ailment is the only one for whom the sexual organs do not define the source and focus of uncleanness. But such a person proves interstitial, since he or she is like the corpse but not wholly so. The exegetical fulcrum of the halakhah governing animate sources of uncleanness is indicated, then, by the comparison of the animate to the inanimate, persons who produce uncleanness to the corpse that produces uncleanness. The comparison of corpse-matter to flux, then, provides a governing analogy for our interpretation of the matter, and, as usual, the halakhah itself identifies the focus of analogical-contrastive thinking and spells out its result. But we have gotten ahead of our story.

The *Zab* and *Zabah* of Lev. 15 transmit uncleanness to that on which they sit or lie, even though they do not touch the chair or bed. So we shall wonder what is special about the bed and comparable objects that subjects those objects to a particular kind of uncleanness, transmitting in a quite distinctive way: using those objects for the purpose for which they are manufactured. That classification of uncleanness, called *midras*- or pressure-uncleanness, pertains only to objects that ordinary are used to bear weight or pressure, that is, beds and chairs and things analogous to them. The halakhah of Kelim shows that objects not used for sitting or lying, e.g., pots and pans, are not susceptible to the *midras*-uncleanness transmitted by a *Zab* or a *Zabah.* And that is a severe uncleanness, comparable to the corpse-uncleanness that affects receptacles and persons, requiring a period of seven days in which the source of uncleanness does not renew itself, on the one side, and a rite of purification in the Temple, on the other. Accordingly, in Zabim we deal with the animate form of uncleanness that falls into the classification of the counterpart inanimate form, that is, *zob* (flux) compares with corpse-matter, the *Zab* or the *Zabah* with the corpse. And, as the logic of the halakhah requires, the media of dissemination will prove comparable as well.

The inanimate and the animate sources of uncleanness bear each its own distinctive traits as well. While the former, the corpse, constitutes a Father of Fathers of uncleanness, turning what touches it into a Father of uncleanness, the latter is a mere Father of uncleanness, and what touches it is in the first remove of uncleanness. Then the process is simple. Once the mere pressure of the *Zab* or *Zabah* has sufficed to transmit uncleanness to something used for lying or sitting, and the chair or bed imparts uncleanness to one who touches it, it has rendered such a one unclean in the first remove, and then the clothing of such a person is unclean in the second remove. How further does an animate source of uncleanness affect others in a way in which a corpse or a dead creeping thing does not? The spit of such a person conveys uncleanness, as much as does his touch (contact), as much as does his pressure or weight to the object or person bearing that weight.

The purification process for the person afflicted with flux-uncleanness takes seven days, just as does the purification process of a person who is a Father of uncleanness by reason of contact with a corpse. Immersion now is required, and the uncleanness passes at sunset.

The rules of the matter to this point derive mainly from Scripture. The relevant verses are, first, Lev. 12:1–8, for the woman after childbirth, then Lev. 15:1–33, encompassing in a single statement both the flux (*zob*) of the *Zab* and the *Zabah*, and semen and menstrual blood, that is, excretions of the sexual organs that do not, and that do, pertain to the cycle of procreation, the former breaking, the latter establishing, that cycle. At Lev. 12:1–8 we have vaginal blood that for seven or fourteen days is deemed unclean in the classification of menstrual blood and then for thirty-three or sixty-six days is deemed altogether clean. The important point to note is that vaginal blood is not always deemed a mark of uncleanness. But, we also notice, a rite of purification is required for the vaginal flow that is classified as unclean. So in that regard—the cultic purification-rite—the woman after childbirth is comparable to the *Zabah* and not to the woman who has menstruated, so Lev. 15:1–33. Scripture's point of emphasis throughout is on three matters, [1] the character of the discharge that signifies flux-uncleanness; [2] the effects of the status of uncleanness: objects that are subject to uncleanness;

and [3] how the uncleanness is transmitted; and the mode of purification and attendant cultic rite signifying the regaining of the normal status of cleanness. The variable that will guide us concerns whether a woman is excluded from, or included within, the procreative cycle. If her vaginal flow does not remove her from acts of procreation (in fact or at least in theory), then no purification-rite is called for; if she is utterly excluded from the process, then it is. The *Zabah*, it is assumed, simply cannot become pregnant and will not engage in sexual relations; the Torah makes no provision for that possibility. The menstruating woman may find herself in a situation in which, inadvertently, she has sexual relations during her period, with the consequence for her mate that he enters her status as to uncleanness.

The contribution of the Oral Torah in the articulation of these facts proves not only formidable but intellectually fructifying, as sages explore the teleology embedded in Scripture's statement. Whether sages have penetrated into the logic inherent in the Written Torah, or whether they have brought to bear a set of considerations all their own in re-framing the inherited Torah into the dense and subtle formation that they set forth, remains to be seen. It suffices to say at the outset that here, as everywhere, the halakhah shows itself to constitute a tight and extremely cogent system, everywhere cognizant of its own pervasive rationality.

The Halakhah of Zabim

What classification of animate beings produces *zob*, that is, contaminating flux from the genitals? What is that *zob*? And how is such *zob* produced? These are the critical questions that the Oral Torah undertakes to answer.

The first question is answered through the intersection of the Mishnah's and the Tosefta's rule. The entire system of differentiated sources and effects of uncleanness that envelops the household and classifies its food, clothing, utensils and furniture as clean and cult-worthy or unclean and not pertains only to Israel and forms a vast system that realizes in the details of the here and now the sanctification of Israel. The Tosefta makes that statement in its own laconic language: All are susceptible to uncleanness through flux, even converts, even slaves, whether freed or not freed, a deaf-mute, imbecile, or minor, a eunuch by castration and a eunuch by nature. Gentiles and the convert and the resident alien are not susceptible to uncleanness through flux. That is because the gentiles form a vast undifferentiated world, unclean with corpse-uncleanness by nature, a realm of death; gentiles' uncleanness is inherent. So when it comes to the uncleanness of the *Zabah* and the *Zab*, we deal only with Israelites. And, given the nature of *zob*—a genital excretion—we deal with Israelites in the household in particular, in their normal, licit marital relationships.

Let us answer the second question, What is that *zob*? It is, in the case of a male, semen emitted by a flaccid penis, and, in the case of a female, blood emitted by the genitals not during the established menstrual period. So, as usual, the system of sanctification and uncleanness forms an exercise in classification: semen and blood, like food and drink and clothing and furniture, may fall into one or another taxon, as circumstances defined by nature dictate.

And what differentiates semen classified as unclean in a minor way from the semen deemed to fall into the category of *zob*? The answer is made explicit—again by the Tosefta—as follows: And what is the difference between flux and semen? Flux comes from a limp penis, and semen from an erection. The uncleanness that results from a healthy ejaculation, meaning, one that at least potentially can accomplish its purpose, procreation, is routine and minor, as Scripture states explicitly, and as M. Zab. 5:11 recapitulates: One who has had a seminal emission is like one who has touched a dead creeping thing. Purification then requires mere immersion and sunset, nothing more. By contrast, one confirmed as a *Zab* or *Zabah* undergoes a purification rite comparable to that required after corpse-uncleanness, a seven-day period, immersion, then an offering on the eighth day—a consider-

able difference. The key is the imputation of a seven-day process of purification, guaranteeing that the victim has fully recovered from his affliction. When *zob* can realize its teleologically-dictated purpose, it is unclean in a minor way. But when it violates that teleology, it is unclean in the league of a corpse.

Who or what differentiates between the teleologically-valid semen (that capable of impregnating a woman) and semen deemed invalid *zob*? This question is answered with equal clarity: *zob* of either male (semen) or female (blood) comes about solely by nature; it cannot derive from an extrinsic cause of the flow of semen, let alone from his own engagement. If a man ejaculated after eating, drinking, jumping, or fantasizing, this is not unclean semen in the category of *zob*. Physical or psychological causes may produce a flow of semen, but that semen does not qualify as *zob*. So in *Zabim* we deal with Israelites who produce genital flux through no activity of their own. It is nature's own flawed semen, semen that violates its own teleology. Man cannot bring it about by an act of will, any more than by an act of will he turns himself into a source of corpse-uncleanness, releasing his soul to contaminate until contained.

The halakhah of the Oral Torah contributes fundamental considerations to the definition of uncleanness deriving from the sexual parts. Scripture speaks of a man's discharge; the halakhah wants such a discharge to take place on three successive days or in three ample, distinct flows even on one day. When it comes to flux of a woman, the halakhah likewise concerns itself with three such appearances on three successive days; only then is the matter confirmed. The consequent, abundant possibilities of doubt preoccupy sages. Much of the law concerns itself with interstitial cases of one kind or another.

The Woman

A flow of vaginal blood may bear diverse significations; it may be menstrual blood, it may be *zibah*-blood, and it may be natural blood. Blood that flows during a regularly-established period is classified as menstrual. Blood that flows in the eleven days between periods—called *zibah*-days—is classified as *zob*, hence *zibah*-days' blood. Now, if blood appears on one of the eleven *zibah*-days, what is the consequence? The woman immerses in the evening. Then she has to wait out the next day to make sure that there is no further flow of blood. If there is none, she is clean and permitted to have sexual relations with her husband. If there are appearances of blood on the three successive days during the period of the *zibah*-days, the woman is classified as a *Zabah*. In both cases—differentiated menstrual- or *zibah*-blood—the consequence, uncleanness, is the same.

Much of the law pursues the question of ambiguous data on the matter. That is the way of the halakhah in general. What is at stake is the woman's status as to procreation. If she is established as unclean for her period, then, after the period, for the next eleven days, she is permitted to have sexual relations, until the advent of the next regular period. If the blood flows during the *zibah*-days, however, then an irregular flow, from day to day, prevents her from participating in the procreative process, and that exclusion from normal sexual relations, by reason of the intermittent, irregular flow, may continue for a long time. So the distinction between menstrual- and *zob*-blood makes a great difference. By the latter the woman is marked as not a fit vehicle for procreation.

The Man

A flow of semen from the flaccid penis forms the counterpart to the vaginal flux of the woman. He who sees semen does not become susceptible to uncleanness by flux for twenty-four hours. One such flow does not establish uncleanness, three on successive days do. The issues must be separate and distinct from one another but need not appear on different days. Questions therefore arise when "clean days," that is, days on which no flux makes an appearance, intervene between days of flux. But the Torah also treats as unclean the flow of

semen from the erect penis, though it is uncleanness in a different classification. The former uncleanness persists; it yields contamination through pressure, not only contact; only when the discharge stops for a week is the man clean, and then a rite of purification is required. But contrast, an emission of semen in the normal manner produces uncleanness removed through immersion and sunset. So we need to differentiate the relationship of semen to flux. Then we face the sequence of interstitial cases—not clean, but not confirmed as unclean—that the details of the law address. Here again, a man who produces semen not in the normal framework of the reproductive life is excluded from the procreative process. The *Zab* and the *Zabah* belong to holy Israel, but nature removes them from the natural processes by which the sanctity of Israel is propagated.

The Media for Transmitting Uncleanness

The special medium, pressure, that transmits the uncleanness of the sexual organs matches the way by which those organs realize their teleology. As sexual activity takes place through not only making contact or touching but also exerting pressure—the penis upon the vagina bringing about pro-creative ejaculation—so uncleanness is transmitted through not only contact but also pressure, specifically, to objects bearing the weight of a person afflicted with the uncleanness of flux. Since sexual activity commonly takes place where people lie, objects used for lying (and, concomitantly, for sitting) are susceptible to the pressure-uncleanness of the sexually-based sources of uncleanness. So a fully-realized logic governs.

But how to sort out the diverse media that take effect for the dissemination of diverse, differentiated sources of uncleanness? The halakhah forms the ideal instrument for acute, systematic differentiation, through analogical-contrastive logic, between and among things that are both alike and not alike. And, as usual, the framers of the authoritative statement of the law, the Mishnah, provide a systematic statement of the matter. That brings us to the exquisite exposition of the halakhah that is provided by *Zabim* Chapter Five. There we deal with the means for transferring uncleanness, direct contact, pressure, carrying, shifting, and overshadowing. Of these modes, it is the last item that is of special interest, because it is the point at which the comparison of *zob-* and corpse-uncleanness becomes necessary, and, with that comparison we reach the exegetical key for understanding the law of *Zabim.*

Let us begin with the summary that the Tosefta—true to its character as the source of generalizations of the Mishnah's exemplary cases—provides (at T. Zab. 3:3):

> More strict is the rule applying to the *Zab* than to one unclean by corpse-uncleanness, and more strict is the rule applying to the one unclean by corpse-uncleanness than to the *Zab*: For the *Zab* makes a bed and chair under him render man unclean and render garments unclean and imparts to what is above him *maddaf*-uncleanness [affecting objects not used for sitting or lying that are located above a *Zab*] and makes food and drink unclean—forms of uncleanness which the corpse does not impart. His flux and his spit and his urine impart stringent uncleanness. And he imparts uncleanness by means of contact to a utensil which is subject to purification by rinsing, and by means of shifting to a clay utensil. And he is liable for a sacrifice and is required to enter running water for his purification, which is not the case for the one who is unclean by reason of corpse-uncleanness. More strict is the rule applying to one unclean by corpse-uncleanness: For the one suffering corpse-uncleanness requires sprinkling with purification-water on the third and seventh day, which is not the case for the *Zab*.

The work of hierarchical classification is never more beautifully accomplished than by a passage such as this elegant statement.

How does the Mishnah frame matters? The Mishnah's key rule is at M. Zab. 5:2: Whatever is carried above the *Zab* is unclean. And whatever the *Zab* is carried upon is clean, except for something which is suitable for sitting and lying, and except for man. Here we find a striking paradox. If something is used for lying or sitting and the *Zab* is carried thereon, the object is unclean; but if it is food or drink that bears his weight, the food or drink is unaffected

by him. And then a mirror-image is taken: whatever is carried above the *Zab*, not bearing his weight, is unclean, inclusive of food and drink. So the *Zab* possesses no power of transmitting uncleanness by overshadowing, but he transmits uncleanness to what overshadows him (thus: *maddaf*-uncleanness). First comes the teleological definition of what is subject to his pressure, which is, what can be used for lying and the like, then comes the antithesis; first comes the location, what is beneath, then comes the antithesis, what is above. It is an amazingly logical system that is set forth, each point then generating its consequence within the same simple logical structure.

So *zob*-uncleanness is transmitted through direct contact, carrying (pressure), shifting, and overshadowing, while corpse-uncleanness is transmitted through direct contact and overshadowing. In both cases, we meet our old friend as we distinguish removes of uncleanness, that is to say, we make a distinction between the situation that prevails when one is in actual contact with the source of uncleanness from that which prevails after one lets go. We further distinguish modes of transmission of uncleanness to the various sorts of objects that receive the uncleanness—a critical point for corpse-uncleanness, when it comes to receptacles, and for *zob* and other pressure-uncleanness when it comes to the matter at hand. We then identify the bed and the chair, things used for lying and sitting, other objects not used for sitting and lying (*maddaf*-objects) and food and drink. The *Zab* imparts uncleanness to objects that bear his weight and that are not shifted by him, which, absent contact or overshadowing, corpse-matter cannot do.

That is the point of T. Zab. 5:1: the Torah has imposed a more stringent rule upon food and drink and *maddaf* not used for sitting and lying that are above the *Zab*, than upon food and drink and maddaf that are under the *Zab*; upon bed and chair that are under the *Zab*, than upon bed and chair that are above the *Zab* and upon *maddaf* not used for lying and sitting that is above the *Zab*, than upon bed and chair that are above the *Zab*; upon man, whether above the *Zab* or below the *Zab*, than upon bed and chair that are above the *Zab*.

The Effects of Zob-Uncleanness, Such as is Transmitted by Pressure (*Midras*)

What are the consequences of *zob*-uncleanness for the Israelite household? An object appropriate to receive uncleanness from the *Zab* or *Zabah*—the bed and analogous objects—becomes unclean when the *Zab* or *Zabah* has stood, sat, lain, leaned upon, or been suspended from said object. Then the object imparts uncleanness to another person who stands, sits, lies upon, or is suspended from the object itself; the bed or analogous object likewise imparts uncleanness to one who carries its weight or to one who touches it ("contact"). It does not convey uncleanness to one who overshadows it, or to one whom it overshadows; it does not function as does corpse-uncleanness. The uncleanness of *Zabim* bears its own message, aligned alongside, but distinct from, the message of the uncleanness conveyed by a corpse within a tent (Ohalot). This is stated at M. Nid. 6:3 as follows: Whatever is susceptible to *midras* uncleanness is susceptible to corpse uncleanness, but there is that which is susceptible to corpse uncleanness and is not susceptible to *midras* uncleanness. The Talmud to the same passage proceeds:

> III.1A. Whatever is susceptible to *midras* uncleanness is susceptible to corpse uncleanness, but there is that which is susceptible to corpse uncleanness and is not susceptible to *midras* uncleanness:
> B. What is encompassed by that statement? What is encompassed is a seah-measure and a tarqab-measure, for it has been taught on Tannaite authority:
> C. "And he who sits on any thing" (Lev. 15:6)—might one suppose that if one turned over a seah-measure and sat down on it, or a tarqab-measure and sat down upon it, it will be unclean?
> D. Scripture states, "On which he who has an issue has sat" (Lev. 15:6), meaning, that which is designated as an object for sitting, which then excludes something concerning which people may say, "Get up and let us do our work with that object."

So while the two sources of uncleanness—the corpse, *Zob*—produce a single consequence, uncleanness, each functions in its

own way, and that must be each for its own reasons, as we shall see.

But first we must incorporate into our account the other form of vaginal blood that serves as a source of uncleanness, the blood that appears in the seven days of the menstrual cycle. Only when we encompass blood of all three classifications—blood that is not a source of uncleanness at all, blood that signifies the menstrual period, and blood that signifies status as a *Zabah*—shall we find possible the identification and systemic interpretation of the religious statement made through the halakhic discourse on vaginal excretions.

The Halakhah of Niddah

Life is to be created in conditions of cultic cleanness such as the Written Torah defines. Ordinary sexual activities, as much as ordinary meals, raise issues of cultic cleanness. But in the case of sexuality, the cult does not define the point at which such issues make an impact upon everyday life; ordinary sexual relations do. This is the one area of the law of cultic cleanness and uncleanness laid out at Leviticus Chapters Eleven through Fifteen that Scripture itself declares in so many words to pertain to the household, not only the cult. In concrete terms, Scripture is explicit that sexual relations may not take place during the menstrual period: "And if a man lies with her, her impurity is communicated to him; he shall be unclean seven days, and any bedding on which he lies shall become unclean." Whether or not the governing consideration pertains to entry into the tabernacle is not specified; but the Oral Torah takes for granted that sexual relations may not take place in the woman's menstrual period, and considerations of cleanness, made explicit in Scripture, then pertain to preserving cultic cleanness at home, not only in connection with entry into the Temple. The upshot is, sexual relations, like eating, involve considerations of cleanness and invoke avoidance of some of those very same sources of uncleanness that close off the Temple to the person affected by them.

For the Oral Torah, when it comes to menstrual uncleanness, the main problem comes at the start of the period. In the clean or *Zibah*-days (when any blood that is excreted is classified as *Zob*), the woman may have sexual relations without scruple; as soon as the menstrual cycle commences, a single drop of blood marks the change in her status to that of a menstruant. Then how do we deal with cases of unclarity as to the exact point at which the period has begun? It is that interstitial period that defines the topic of Tractate Niddah—a topic that the law of *Zabim* did not treat, since the *Zabah* generates no cases of uncertainty.

Tractate Niddah discusses the uncleanness of certain vaginal flows and considers cases of doubt in connection with that same matter. These fluids are menstrual blood, the abortion, and the like; the women are classified as Israelite, Samaritan, Sadducean, and so on. The animate source of uncleanness—here, the woman—has to take precautions to ascertain her status, and the net effect is to require the woman to pay close attention to the condition of her vagina. The woman who has a fixed period still has to examine herself in the morning, at twilight, and before having sexual relations. That imposes considerations of cultic cleanness on a variety of homely situations. A man concerned with seminal emission, by contrast, is discouraged from doing the same, but if his motive is to look out for flux, he is praised as well. While considerations of eating priestly rations in the state of cultic cleanness register, the premise of the halakhah throughout places us in the home of an ordinary caste-Israelite. Then, if a drop of blood is found on the man's cloth, the man is assumed to have had sexual relations with a menstruating woman; so too, if it is found on hers at the time of intercourse. But if it is found on hers later on, the matter is not certain. The upshot is, sexual relations are subject to considerations of cultic cleanness, even when the prevailing assumption is that both parties are cultically clean for the act.

Here again, considerations of uncleanness require that we sort out the sources of an uncleanness that is, physically, undifferentiated—what class of woman with an affiliation in Israel has produced the blood?

But it goes without saying, it is in the setting of holy Israel that the entire matter is worked out. Gentile women are unclean by definition, and considerations of Niddah- or *Zibah*-blood do not pertain. Scripture speaks of Israel, not gentiles. But the spit and urine of the gentile are unclean, for the gentile is classified as a *Zab*, and the blood of the gentile woman is unclean just as are the urine and spit of the *Zab* (when wet, not when dry). But Samaritan and Sadducean women are Israelites and the pertinent distinctions among types of blood do apply. Because they continue unclean for any sort of blood, Samaritan women miscalculate, not differentiating one type of blood from another, and hence impart uncleanness to everything on which they sit or lie. In their power to differentiate among types of blood, knowing the difference between menstrual and other classifications of vaginal excretions, sages thus distinguish (their) Israel from all others claiming to form part of Israel.

Since the menstruating woman takes her position in-between the two poles—wholly participating in the procreative process, wholly excluded from it—we must find entirely predictable that a principal problematic of the law concerns cases of doubt. That is to say, since in the sequence from the menstrual period to the clean days and back to the menstrual period, a woman participates in the cycle of procreation, what we need to know is how to deal with uncertainty as to her particular status at a given moment. How do we deal with the status of objects the woman has touched in the interval between the moment at which she knew for certain she was clean and the one at which she discovered she was menstruating? The Niddah's procreative interstitiality—she can procreate, as a *Zabah* cannot, and for that reason is deemed at some moments clean, at some, unclean, in a way in which a *Zabah* is never deemed clean—then accounts for what is at stake in the Oral Law. What is involved is retrospective, and thus retroactive contamination, that is to say, how do we classify persons or objects that have had contact with the woman at the time at which her status is uncertain?

The solution is to mediate between two points of certainty. The woman is assumed to remain perpetually alert as to her status, inspecting her sexual organs for spots of blood. So if we look backward from the moment of discovery of blood, we come to a point at which the woman has last inspected herself and found herself clean. Then all objects she has touched from that last inspection to the point of discovery of the blood may be deemed unclean. Or we may impose an arbitrary standard of twenty-four hours, in the assumption that the woman is unlikely to have missed a vaginal flow for longer than that span of time. The halakhah takes the view that each span of time—the period from the last inspection, the arbitrary period of twenty-four hours—lessens the other, so that the longest interval of uncertainty is twenty-four hours. But if a woman has a fixed period, that establishes the presumptive fact and decides the issue. She then assumes that at no time prior to the advent of her regular period has she produced vaginal blood, inspection or no. Once the period is established, we have ample evidence on how to resolve situations subject to doubt. Thus, if a woman habitually saw blood at the beginning of [symptoms of] periods, all things requiring cleanness that she prepared while the symptoms of periods are in progress are unclean. If she usually saw blood at the end of symptoms of periods, all the things requiring cleanness that she prepared while the symptoms of the periods lasted are deemed clean. Rules of this kind present no surprises, working out commonsense distinctions as they do.

Sages distinguish categories of blood produced by an abortion, determining whether or not the vaginal blood derives from childbirth or from the menstrual period. Thus, if the fetus bears human form, it is deemed to have been a birth and the rules of Lev. 12 apply; if not, the woman is clean, or, if the event takes place during her menstrual period, is regarded as nothing more than a menstruant. But then the sex of the fetus has to be determined, and sages supply rules for doing so. So too if a woman excretes blood during labor not in her menstrual period; then the blood is attributed to labor, and the woman is not deemed a menstruant.

Because they fall into the classification of

substances that impart uncleanness, the blood of the menstruating woman, the flux and blood of the *Zab*, the dead creeping thing, carrion, and semen all have to be compared and contrasted as well. The point of differentiation concerns the power to contaminate whether wet or dry. The blood of the menstruating woman and the flesh of a corpse impart uncleanness wet or dry. But the *Zab*'s flux, phlegm, spit, and the dead creeping thing, carrion, and semen impart uncleanness only when they are wet, unless they can be soaked and return to their former condition, in which case they impart uncleanness even when dry. So the difference is not absolute but relative. If the substances that do not impart uncleanness when dry can in fact be restored through soaking, they revert to their original virulence.

The real question then pertains to what menstrual blood and corpse-matter bear in common, and once we ask that question, we find ourselves with a possible, if only tentative answer, already supplied in Tractate Ohalot: the interplay of soul and body must come into consideration. Menstrual blood now is treated as equivalent to corpse-matter, meaning, both contain remnants of the soul, the one having been permeated by the soul, which is now the principal source of uncleanness, the other (so it appears) deriving from the cache of potential souls; but that is only a guess.

What happens when death overtakes one of the animate sources of uncleanness under consideration here? If a *Zab* or *Zabah*, a menstruating woman or a woman unclean after childbirth or a person suffering the skin ailment dies, how does the uncleanness emanating from them disseminate? It is through carriage, even without contact; the same is so for a gentile. That is so until the flesh rots. In this aspect, then, the named animate sources of uncleanness differ from the corpse. The upshot is, the particular kind of uncleanness affecting the named classes of persons continues to classify the persons at hand, and they are not now deemed mere corpses along with all other corpses. The uncleanness that has enveloped them defines the working of the uncleanness that exudes from them, even after death; only when the flesh rots do they enter the taxon of ordinary corpses.

Except at the specified times, cultic cleanness defines the natural condition of the Israelite. Thus all the eleven days that follow the seven days of menstruation a woman is in the assumption of being clean, unless evidence to the contrary presents itself. On that basis, if a virgin who has not yet menstruated is married, she is assumed to be cultically clean through the honeymoon; any blood is held to derive from the hymen. So too if a woman has completed her period and examined herself and found that she was clean, but did not immerse at twilight at the end of her seventh day, and later on found she was unclean, she is assumed to have been clean to that point.

The Religious Principles of Zabim and Niddah

At issue is the character of a woman's vaginal secretions or blood: when does it appear, how is it classified? The distinction between menstrual or *Niddah*-blood and *Zibah*-blood, the former part of the procreative cycle, the latter not, yields very little difference in actuality, except at the point of purification. The one is vaginal blood that flows during the woman's established menstrual cycle. The other is vaginal blood that flows during the eleven clean days between one cycle and another; these are called *Zibah*-days, in that blood that flows during the eleven days between menstrual cycles is deemed *Zob*, as we have already established. In some ways—those that have to do with actualities—the two types of vaginal flow are comparable, in others, they contrast.

If we compare Scripture's presentation of the two forms of animate female-sources of uncleanness, we see how they relate, starting with the menstruating woman. The first thing we notice is that while the menstrual period is limited, the uncleanness attaching to the *Zabah* is indeterminate. The woman who menstruates may before and afterward engage in sexual relations and become pregnant. The *Zabah* may not engage in sexual relations and so may not become pregnant.

She is removed from the entire procreative process so long as her excretions continue. The second thing we see is that while the Niddah accomplishes purification through immersion and sunset, the *Zabah* undergoes an elaborate cultic rite, comparable to the rite of purification after contracting corpse-uncleanness. So while the signification of the uncleanness—vaginal flux—is the same, the circumstances as to timing and longevity vastly distinguish the one from the other, and, as I shall suggest presently, the distinction makes a massive difference in our reading of what is at stake. Here is Scripture's presentation of the pertinent laws:

> MENSTRUAL UNCLEANNESS: When a woman has a discharge, her discharge being blood from her body, *she shall remain in her impurity seven days*;
>
> 1. whoever touches her shall be unclean until evening.
> 2. Anything that she lies on during her impurity shall be unclean; and anything that she sits on shall be unclean.
> 3. Anyone who touches her bedding shall wash his clothes, bathe in water, and remain unclean until evening; and anyone who touches any object on which she has sat shall wash his clothes, bathe in water, and remain unclean until evening. Be it the bedding or be it the object on which she has sat, on touching it he shall be unclean until evening.
> 4. And if a man lies with her, her impurity is communicated to him; he shall be unclean seven days, and any bedding on which he lies shall become unclean.

The *Zabah* is presented as follows:

> THE *ZABAH*: When a woman has had a discharge of blood for many days, not at the time of her impurity, or when she has a discharge beyond her period of impurity, *she shall be unclean as though at the time of her impurity, as long as her discharge lasts*.
>
> 2. Any bedding on which she lies while her discharge lasts shall be for her like bedding during her impurity; and any object on which she sits shall become unclean as it does during her impurity;
> 3. whoever touches them shall be unclean; he shall wash his clothes, bathe in water, and remain unclean until evening.
> 4. When she becomes clean of her discharge, she shall count off seven days, and after that she shall be clean. On the eighth day she shall take two turtledoves or two pigeons and bring them to the priest at the entrance of the tent of meeting. The priest shall offer the one as a sin-offering and the other as a burnt-offering; and the priest shall make expiation on her behalf, for her unclean discharge, before the Lord.
>
> You shall put the Israelites on guard against their uncleanness, lest they die through their uncleanness by defiling my tabernacle which is among them.

The menstruating woman and the *Zabah* convey uncleanness through touch, and both serve as Fathers of uncleanness, setting into the first remove of uncleanness whatever they touch. One who touches what they have lain upon or sat upon immerses, awaits sunset, and is then clean. As to sexual relations, the menstruating woman imparts her own status to the one with whom she has sexual relations, and he imparts pressure-uncleanness by sitting and lying as well. As to the *Zabah*, touching produces the same result; no provision is made for sexual relations. A cultic purification-rite is provided for her, but not for the menstruating woman, who, at the end of her period, simply immerses and waits for sunset. She is then in the first remove, her period having concluded.

So while the concrete effects of the respective sources of vaginal uncleanness coincide, the purification-rite contrasts sharply. The *Zabah* purifies herself in a blood-rite at the tabernacle. The purification-rite, not required for the menstruating woman, marks the woman as suitable to reenter the procreative cycle; the flux has removed her from that cycle, the cessation signifies her suitability once more. We have, therefore, to distinguish *Niddah*- from *Zibah*-blood (*Zob*). The facts at hand suffice to show that *Zibah*-blood signifies an aberration in the procreative cycle, Niddah-blood proves integral to that cycle. The one is irregular and disrupts normal sexual relations, marking the woman as one who, at that point, may not reproduce life (any more than, from sages' view, the semen emitted by a flaccid penis can reproduce life). The other is regular, integral to the normal sexual cycle, and marks the woman as one wholly integrated to the cycle of reproduction. Then the entire sequence—eleven *Zibah*-days, seven *Niddah*-days—forms an account of the woman's

relationship to the procreative cycle, which involves three possibilities: she wholly participates, having sexual relations, receiving semen and not emitting blood; she is wholly excluded, not having sexual relations at all, and she is temporarily excluded but remains sexually accessible, which is why the Torah makes provision for the status of one who, in her period, does have sexual relations with her.

Viewed together, the halakhah of Zabim and that of Niddah together make a single coherent statement, just as Moses arranged matters at Lev. 15. The contrast between blood in the *Niddah*-days and blood in the *Zibah*-days frames the issue at hand. We cannot understand Tractate Niddah outside of the framework of Tractate Zabim, and, in the nature of things, the contrary is also the case. The points of intersection—the consequences of uncleanness imparted by vaginal blood—and the points of differentiation—sexuality and the purification rite, respectively—leave no choice but to consider Niddah and Zabim a single statement within the halakhah, of which Zabim forms the main lines of thought, Niddah the subordinated and secondary results thereof.

The character of *Zob* and of its flow guides us to the center of the religious worldview at hand. It is genital discharge that by its nature cannot accomplish that for which it is created. In a word, the physical world portrayed here finds its definitive traits in the teleology of things, which yields the meetings and the matchings that produce the halakhah of Zabim. The uncleanness generated by sexual fluids that do not realize their teleology passes via pressure, analogous to that of the sexual relation, to objects that serve for sexuality. When the teleological physics of sexual fluids accomplish their goal, they bring about life. Then, consequently, a minor uncleanness is brought about by semen properly ejaculated, and so too with vaginal blood of an episodic character outside the regular period.

When the teleology—the procreation of life—of the sexual parts, encompassing further the objects used for sexual intercourse, and extending even to the activities and exertions characteristic thereof—when that teleology is not realized, then severe uncleanness results. That uncleanness then overspreads each of the components of procreation that has not realized its purpose:

> [1] the fluid itself, now source of uncleanness analogous to corpse-uncleanness;
> [2] the activity, exerting pressure, now medium for disseminating not life but uncleanness, and
> [3] the bed and analogous objects, now the focus of not procreative activity but contamination.

Now, not realizing their tasks within the teleological physics at hand:

> [1] the fluid is unclean,
> [2] the bed and analogous objects become the unique foci of the uncleanness of said fluid, and
> [3] the activity—pressure—serves as the medium not of life but of anti-life, such as, we now realize, cultic uncleanness disseminated through *midras*-uncleanness in particular represents.

How are we to compare and contrast the uncleanness of the soul, the seven-day uncleanness of the corpse and corpse-matter, with the uncleanness of *Zob*? When we examine, the uncleanness exuding from the *Zab* or *Zabah*, encompassing not only the flux itself, whether semen or blood, but the body-fluids, e.g., the spit, the urine, of a person so afflicted, we find an interesting fact. *Zob* does not constitute a Father of Fathers of Uncleanness as the corpse does. The *Zabah* or *Zab* is a Father of uncleanness, contaminating the garments and utensils of someone who touches her or him, also those things that bear her or his weight. These are made unclean in the first remove. So the virulence of the escaping soul vastly exceeds that of the genital excretions that do not realize their purpose.

Different in degree, they form a common genus. The character of *Zob*-fluid and the uncleanness of the soul that we examined in the context of corpse-uncleanness share the common quality that, when touched, both sorts of fluid impart uncleanness. If there is an object suitable to serve as a bed or chair or saddle that lies underneath a stone, and a *Zab* or *Zabah* bears down on the stone, e.g., stands, sits, lies or leans on it or hangs from it, because he is supported by the stone, the bed or chair that bears

the weight of the intervening stone is itself contaminated. But corpse-uncleanness—e.g., a receptacle containing a bone—not touched but nonetheless the weight of which is carried produces no effect, e.g., through an intervening layer of disconnected material, while *Zob*-uncleanness that is not contacted but the weight of which is carried does produce its uncleanness. So corpse-uncleanness possesses a tangibility, a tactility, that *Zob*-uncleanness lacks, and *Zob*-uncleanness responds to forces that affect corpse-uncleanness little or not at all. What is the difference?

Using our imagination of the workings of the physics of liquids in this odd context, we may on that basis differentiate the uncleanness of the corpse from the uncleanness of flux. The one, while thick, diffuses into the air of a contained space. It is therefore comparable to a gaseous substance; but, as we noted, it flows like a viscous fluid, along fairly firm lines, within a sizable space, a squared handbreadth. So while comparable to a gaseous substance, it remains, if invisible, thick and tactile. *Zob*, by contrast, does not diffuse in the air. It permeates the objects that are congruent to its effects. Then, if a clean person bears down, the *Zob* under pressure is excreted upward onto the clean person, even through intervening, disconnected layers of material; the transmission takes place by reason of pressure, not contact.

Now how are we to differentiate the gaseous corpse-uncleanness, which does not respond to pressure, from comparable *Zob*-uncleanness, which does? A difference in (imagined) viscosity ought to explain matters. Corpse-uncleanness flows within a guiding framework (under pressure, spurts upward and downward). But it does not permeate and pass through intervening fabric ("tent") or other materials. *Zob*-uncleanness under pressure is not guided along the lines of that which conveys the pressure—the tent for example—but flows right into, and through, the fabric or other material that contains it. Hence seen in physical terms, the former is dense, glutinous and semi-fluid, the latter attenuated, spare and light.

But those physical traits on their own do not suffice to explain the difference as to the modes of movement between the uncleanness exuding from the corpse and that emitted by the sexual organs, male or female. Specifically, why should the latter classification of uncleanness flow so as to pass through a stone on which the *Zab* exerts pressure through direct contact, as well as weight, to the bed beneath? Why should a receptacle contain corpse-uncleanness but not the uncleanness of *Zob*, that is, why should a receptacle be unaffected by *midras*- or pressure uncleanness of a *Zab* or *Zabah*? Asked in that way, the question bears its own answer. We deal in *Zob* with a kind of uncleanness that matches, that responds to, its own origin, assignment, and character: origin in sexual organs, assignment, procreation, and character defined by a dysfunction in those organs. Sexually-generated fluid that, by (sages') definition cannot accomplish the purpose that, by nature, sexually-generated fluid is supposed to achieve—procreation of life—affects, as we have noted, those sorts of objects that serve sexually, ones used for lying and the like, but not those sorts of objects that under normal circumstances do not serve sexually, receptacles, for example.

As with the corpse and as we shall see again in connection with the uncleanness of the person afflicted with the skin ailment described at Lev. 13—the uncleanness is transmitted through spatial relationships not involving direct, physical contact: overshadowing the corpse or being overshadowed by it, so too the *Zab* or *Zabah* in relationship to a bed or chair, so too the person afflicted with the skin ailment within a contained space. In all three instances, location within a demarcated spatial relationship with the source of uncleanness, not only actual contact, direct or through pressure (as the case requires), serves as cause of dissemination of uncleanness from the source to the focus thereof. Let us address the particular rule of spatial relationship in the transmission of uncleanness of a *Zab* or *Zabah*, because there we shall see the inexorable operation of the principle of realized or unrealized teleology as the key to all else, affecting both the source and the subject of contamination.

That brings us to the paradoxical fact of

the rule that overshadowing serves corpse-uncleanness and *Zob*-uncleanness, but with powerful distinctions, and each in its own way. What overshadows a corpse contracts corpse-uncleanness, and what a corpse overshadows is contaminated by corpse-uncleanness. That is without regard to the character of the objects. We do not, furthermore, differentiate between the two locations of the corpse relative to the object in relationship thereto. So locative relationship and substantive character play no role in the transmission of corpse-uncleanness through overshadowing. The corpse that overshadows or is overshadowed produces its effects without regard to what is affected. But that is not how matters are with *Zob*-uncleanness. Here we do differentiate, in the situation of overshadowing, between the character of classes of objects. And, concomitantly, we also differentiate locatively, between the two locations that said classes of objects, above or below the *Zab*. So we have two variables as to the character of objects, and two variables as to their location, and, further, these variables produce opposite results, the locative for the substantive, as the case requires.

Here are some of the exemplary facts. If a *Zab* overshadows food and drink, unlike the corpse he has no affect upon them. But if food or drink are located above the *Zab*, they are made unclean. Why the mirror-relationships? What is located where the *Zab* lies or sits but cannot serve for lying or sitting is unaffected by him; what is located where the *Zab* cannot lie or sit and cannot serve for lying or sitting—thus what in relationship to the *Zab* is in its natural location, not in its unnatural location—is affected by him. So he functions as does a corpse in conveying uncleanness, the medium is the same; but he does not impart uncleanness as does a corpse. What does not conform in relationship to the *Zab* to its natural location is affected by him; what conforms is not.

Here again, a teleological logic comes into play through analogical-contrastive dialectics, with the things that enjoy their natural relationship to the *Zab* subject to his effect, those not, not; and the opposite also comes into force: what the *Zab* cannot use for lying that is located where the *Zab* cannot lie down is affected by the *Zab*! So considerations of fulfilling the physical purpose for which the thing is shaped take over, even here. To state matters simply: teleological physics dictates the course of contamination by *Zob* and the results, for things affected by that contamination, as well. And it is a simple teleology, which we identified at the very outset: what serves for procreation is distinguished, in respect to *Zob*-uncleanness, from what does not. And the rest follows.

What we confront, therefore, is a physics permeated by teleology: the flow of fluids in response to the condition or purpose of that to which, or from which, they flow, and not in response only to their own character, e.g., to the density of the atoms that comprise the fluid and define its viscosity. That which matches the character of an object or its purpose flows to that object or its purpose, and the invisible flow itself conforms to the character of the activity conducted with said object. The bed, used for lying or sitting, then is affected by pressure, carried on in acts of lying or sitting; the particular uncleanness at hand, sexual excretions in a non-procreative framework, affects those objects that by their nature serve, through those actions that by their nature produce, procreation.

When sexual activity bearing the potential of procreation takes place, a transient uncleanness results—that of healthy semen, which passes upon immersion and sunset, as Scripture says. When sexual excretions lacking that potential take place, a virulent uncleanness takes over, life replaced by anti-life, by a form of death nearly as virulent as the death that takes over the life of a man and causes the excretion of the soul. The soul of the fully-realized man or woman is thick, the unrealized, proto-soul of *Zob*, thin. But the former can be contained in physical limits, as it was in the body, while the latter flows teleologically, its character and therefore its purpose overriding the substantive, physical traits, or physical traits responding to teleological matches (whichever formulation better serves).

In this same context, moreover, the difference in the rite of purification of the Niddah

and the *Zabah* emerges as entirely rational within the system. The Niddah's purification-rite is analogous to the purification-rite of the man who has emitted semen in the normal course of procreation, and for the same reason: the Niddah has passed through a natural stage in the procreative cycle. When menstrual uncleanness ends and she reverts to the condition of cleanness required for propagation of life in conditions of sanctification, she immerses and awaits sunset. She need not undergo a cultic rite of purification because she has never been removed from the cycle of life. Niddah-blood then bears no analogy to the blood of a corpse, but *Zabah*-blood does. That is because, within the teleological physiology as much as the teleological physics of the system, Niddah-blood fulfils its teleology, Zob-flux (*Zabah*-blood) does not.

The goal of nature, its telos in procreation, pertains to Israel and the propagation of the holy people. Sages make that point explicitly, because their perfect mastery of the Written Torah so instructed them. Let me explain. With a system so permeated by the conviction that things bear a natural purpose and accomplish a goal that is set for them by their very nature, we must identify the central and generative focus of the teleology realized in uncleanness or sanctification. So we ask ourselves, Who matters, who makes a difference? The answer, repeated in one sector of the halakhah after another, is, only the Israelite. It is his or her life-force that comes under scrutiny. It is that life-force, that blood, that accomplishing its teleology procreates life and yields a minor form of uncleanness, but, not accomplishing its teleology, is deemed analogous to the departing soul. What does it take to constitute an animate source of uncleanness, affecting the Israelite household, when it comes to the sexual organs? The first and most important consideration is, only Israelites produce flux capable of effecting contamination under the laws of *Zabim*.

Gentiles do not. The halakhah of Niddah makes that point explicit. Their body fluids contaminate under other rubrics of uncleanness, but in general they contaminate like corpses and not like animate beings. They, their body-fluids, their land—all represent a realm of undifferentiated death, contrasting with the highly differentiated life attaching to holy Israel. In the articulation of the halakhah of animate sources of uncleanness, therefore, we see the consequence of the basic problem, the generative tension of the Oral Torah, with its conviction about the sanctification and sanctity of the Israelite household in the model of the holy Temple. Once issues of sanctification encompass not only the family and genealogy, but also the bed and the table, procreation and sustenance of life, then those who keep the entire Torah, oral and written, have to work out those governing patterns of behavior that will guide toward the realization of sanctification and the preservation of sanctity. Such patterns then order and regularize relationships between the cultically-clean and the cultically unclean, specifying the causes and consequences of contamination.

Having focused upon what we do find, we ought not miss what we do not find. Intentionality plays no role in the capacity to transmit uncleanness imputed to the animate beings; the corpse transmits uncleanness *ex opere operato*, from the moment of death, about which the deceased was not consulted, and so too the menstruating woman, man afflicted with flux or the *Zab*, and the woman or the *Zabah* afflicted with flux outside of her regular period, effect uncleanness willy-nilly. The woman's period does not depend upon her intentionality. And equally probatively, the law stresses that the flux of the *Zab* and the *Zabah* that bears the power to contaminate—semen from the one, blood from the other—make its appearance on its own. The blood or semen must come about without the connivance of the afflicted party. The teleological principle that permeates the whole underscores the exclusion of man's or woman's will.

And that leads us at the very heart of the halakhah of *Zabim*, the analogy to death. Why does the halakhah defining sources of uncleanness exclude all consideration of the attitude or intentionality of the animate being, the man or woman, who becomes a sourceof uncleanness? Because of the governing analogy, death: we die willy-nilly, neither by intention nor by plan, and to

death our attitude is null. What by its nature compares with death also contaminates like death, which comes whether or not it is wanted. Then the details of the law flow from the natural teleology that governs: excretions of the sexual organs that by their nature cannot procreate life, affect objects used in that process, and that is accomplished by means of activities analogous to the sexual act or integral thereto: *Zob* or semen from a flaccid penis affect beds and like objects through pressure.

The systemic goal is for life to be created and maintained as if it were lived in the holy Temple, protected from the sources of contamination that pollute the Temple. Perhaps, embodying the perfection of the natural world, the Temple as if here and now stands for Eden then and there. For the paramount aspiration of the halakhah is to restore humanity to Eden, Israel to the land of Israel. That conclusion is hardly far-fetched within the analogical-contrastive mode of thought of the halakhah. For if, as is blatant, uncleanness closes off access to the Temple and its surrogates and counterparts in the households of Israel: their tables and their beds, then cleanness—counterpart and opposite—must open the way to sanctification. Uncleanness attended to, cleanness attained, all media of restoration of cleanness, Israel's natural condition, set the household of Israel *en route* to sanctification, localized in the Temple down below, matched by heaven up above, realized by the household here and now of bed and table, Eden then and there. And these terms invoke no ineffable abstractions, but, we must constantly recall, the concrete activities that routinely take place in bed and at table: the labor of Adam and Eve in making and maintaining life.

JACOB NEUSNER

R

Rabbi in Classical Judaism

All attempts to describe the rabbi—the religious virtuoso of ancient Judaism—must begin with the nature of the sources and, first and foremost, with the recognition that virtually all of our information about these figures comes from documents formulated, written, and redacted within their own circles (fig. 127). Fashioned and molded by rabbis, these texts constitute the material remains of Rabbinic Judaism and are the primary evidence for its existence. A precise understanding of Rabbinic textual constructions therefore provides the foundation and justification for all other inferences from the texts.

Rabbinic literature, made up of documents dated from the third century C.E. to early medieval times, treats two broad subjects: halakhah (Rabbinic praxis, the way of doing things) and the interpretation of Scripture. The documents consist of large numbers of distinct, usually self-contained passages of varying length and character grouped in patterns of thematic, topical, or scriptural arrangement. Within these writings, the stories about rabbis are always presented in the setting of discussions of unrelated events, for, uniquely in western antiquity, Rabbinic literature is devoid of biography or hagiography. Indeed, Rabbinic documents are anonymous, and all include significant numbers of pericopae that are not associated with the names of specific masters. No document claims to be the writing of an individual rabbi in his own words, and all contain the ostensible sayings of, and stories about, many rabbis of diverse generations. Selected to suit the purposes of compilers and redactors, the documents' components are not pristine and natural. They have been revised and reformulated in the processes of transmission and redaction, with the consequence that the actual words of any rabbi are beyond recovery. Rabbinic literature is severely edited, anonymous, and collective.

Use of Rabbinic documents to recover Rabbinic biography is further limited by the fact that the literature as a whole, especially in the area of halakhah, is terse and formulaic, presented in a lean and disciplined vocabulary that constitutes a scholastic shorthand. Even the most elementary halakhic statement presumes a tacit dimension of Rabbinic knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, and motivations. The result of this is that the Rabbinic literature virtually ignores the world beyond its own preoccupations. Its documents obscure their origin by neglecting the events that led to their formation, and they report remarkably little about ordinary Jews or non-Jews. This insularity is reinforced by the nearly total absence of external witness to Rabbinic religion, culture, and society. The documents thus present the restricted discourse of a small number of men who appear primarily engaged in observing discussing, and analyzing ideas, opinions, and behaviors, sometimes those recounted in Scripture, but most often those promoted within the Rabbinic group itself. Rabbinic writing addresses Rabbinic specialists; it is a parochial literature wholly obsessed with itself.

The technical knowledge presupposed by most of Rabbinic literature shows that rabbis produced their texts not for the world at large, nor for strangers and outsiders, but for themselves. In the texts, selected reports of the opinions, arguments, and

activities of generations of rabbis are encased in anonymous, synchronic, and rhetorically disciplined frameworks. It follows that the documents' picture of the world and of the rabbis themselves necessarily is overdetermined, manipulated, and incomplete. Rabbinic editors offer no comprehensive and nuanced report, no mirror image, of their colleagues and precursors. They produce instead a vision of their world as they imagined it and described it to themselves. With language as their principal representational tool, the producers of Rabbinic documents create the world they reveal. Rabbinic literature thus emerges not as an essentially neutral and inerrant record of "what actually happened" in Rabbinic antiquity but rather as an enormous labor of intellect and imagination that codifies a particular Jewish conception of reality in a distinctive mode of discourse that both derives from and generates that conception.

These substantive and literary traits, which inform the presentation of all persons in Rabbinic documents, make the construction of portraits of ancient rabbis extremely problematic. The sources at best provide the barest hint of the relations between rabbis and the non-Rabbinic social and economic world, and they thus block our perception of the rabbis at work in society. A truly critical analysis of Rabbinic religious leadership becomes difficult, for, without evidence of followers, little of certainty can be said about leaders. The absence of biography obscures evidence of family lineage, local origin, economic status, and other marks of social identification. Indeed, Rabbinic masters are never introduced, and, while there is a habit of referring to rabbis as "X son of Y, these patronymic surnames, though known in most cases, are sparingly applied.

In the Rabbinic sources, rabbis simply appear from nowhere, speaking and arguing as if everyone knows who they are. The absence of biography, however, hardly exhausts the problem. The texts offer a fragmented picture of rabbis. The dicta and opinions assigned and the stories told about any given master are nowhere collected under his name but are scattered throughout the documents, often in different versions that serve the varied purposes of compilers and redactors. Particularly in the earlier documents, rabbis appear in disagreement with one another, but the disputes tend to remain unresolved. The conflicting opinions remain in endless juxtaposition and their relative importance is uninflected. This mode of representation suppresses evidence of authority, domination, and power among the disputants and makes rabbis appear as equals. This is despite the fact that, as Richard Kalmin suggests, in the Babylonian Talmud, ". . . very likely, most interactions between rabbis involve colleagues . . . of widely different status. Colleagues of approximately equal status, particularly the most important leaders of their generation, rarely interact."[1] But this trait is obscured by the distinctive literary character of that document, which homogenizes all named authorities and obscures evidence of individuality.

Rabbinic literature, indeed, is largely indifferent to the presentation of distinctive individuality. No document pays homage to a particular rabbi. None celebrates one man's virtue, reflects his thoughts, or recounts his deeds. The sources offer no museum of well-rounded Rabbinic portraits, only a gallery of partial sketches and disjointed images. Rabbinic literature presents its protagonists paratactically, in pieces. It is a literature of contention without victors, in which the sense of separate existences is minimal. This massive labor of homogeneity suggests that devotion to individual masters played little role in the motivations of the men who made the texts. In all of the literature, no rabbi emerges as central, dominant, determinative; none appears to symbolize, guide, or shape Rabbinic destiny. No Rabbinic texts claims to be the product of the life, career, or inner struggle of a single great man. Rather, the men appear as products of the sources.

No doubt, individual rabbis achieved importance, decisively shaped Rabbinic culture, and affected the lives of their contemporaries. No doubt stories about rabbis are not wholly fabrications and falsehoods, literary inventions grounded in no historical reality. But, whatever their origin, the segments of Rabbinic lives thought worthy of narration and transmission appear in their

present form for purposes other than hero worship, dedication to a particular master, or a desire to recount and preserve the past. A representative narrative illustrates the extent to which these traits inhibit our ability to discern the exact nature of the early rabbi and to discern his true place within early Jewish culture. The story, which appears at M. R.H. 2:8–9, reads:

A. Rabban Gamaliel had pictures of the shapes of the moon on a tablet and on the wall of his upper chamber, which he would show untrained observers [who came to give evidence that, on the preceding night, they had seen the appearance of the new moon, which would determine the beginning of the next Hebrew month] and say, "Did you see it like this or like that?"
B. It happened that two came and said, "We saw it in the east in the morning and in the west in the evening."
C. Said R. Yohanan b. Nuri, "They are false witnesses."
D. When they came to Yavneh, Rabban Gamaliel accepted them.
E. And again two came and said, "We saw it at its [expected] time, but on the next night it did not appear."
F. And Rabban Gamaliel accepted them.
G. Said R. Dosa b. Harkinas, "They are false witnesses.
H. "How can they testify that a woman has given birth when the next day her belly is [still] between her teeth?"
I. R. Joshua said to him, "I approve your words."
J. Rabban Gamaliel sent a message to him: "I decree that you shall come before me with your staff and your money on the day that falls as the Day of Atonement according to your reckoning [on which day such travel, carrying these objects, would be forbidden]."
K. R. Aqiba went and found him upset.
L. He said to him, "I am able to learn that whatever Rabban Gamaliel has done is done,
M. "as it is written, "These are the appointed seasons of the Lord, the holy assemblies which you shall proclaim' (Lev. 23:4), [meaning]: Whether in their time or not in their time, I have no other appointed seasons but these."
N. He came to R. Dosa b. Harkinas.
O. He said to him, "If we come to judge the court of Rabban Gamaliel, we will have to judge each and every court that has stood from the days of Moses until now,
P. "as it is written, 'Moses went up with Aaron, Nadav, and seventy of the elders of Israel' (Exod. 24:9). And why were the names of the elders not made explicit? Rather, it is to teach that each and every [group of] three who stood as a court over Israel, lo, they are like the court of Moses."
Q. And he took his staff and his money in his hand and went to Yavneh on the day that fell as the Day of Atonement according to his reckoning.
R. Rabban Gamaliel stood up and kissed him on the head.
S. He said to him, "Come in peace, my master and my disciple—my master in wisdom, and my disciple, since you have accepted my words."

This account is particularly useful since it reports an alleged historical event with political consequences for the Rabbinic movement. It also treats an issue crucial in the history of Judaism, the determination of the sacred calendar after the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple.

In Judaism, the yearly calendar is calculated according to the sun, but the months, and therefore the dates of the annual holy days, are determined by the appearance of the moon. Before the fall of the Jerusalem Temple in 70 C.E., the priests proclaimed the sacred times of the year. In the aftermath of the Temple's destruction, the new Rabbinic movement appropriated that priestly task to itself. This story reports a conflict on this issue between Gamaliel II, the patriarch and ostensible leader of the rabbis at Yavneh, and two other Yavnean masters, Dosa b. Harkinas and Joshua b. Hananiah.

The story can be divided into three substantively related but formally unintegrated segments, A, B-D, and E-S. A sets the stage and supplies the halakhic topic of the pericope, the examination of witnesses about the appearance of the new moon. B-D is a brief prelude to the longer account at E-S. In B-D, Gamaliel examines two witnesses and accepts their testimony, presumably for the beginning of a new month, despite the objection of Yohanan b. Nuri. In the barrenness of B-D, so typical of Rabbinic narratives, we are told the rationale neither for Yohanan b. Nuri's judgment nor for Gamaliel's rejection of it. The opinions simply are juxtaposed without being brought into explicit interaction.

At issue in both B-D and E-I is the correct evaluation of testimony about the new moon. Gamaliel accepts even irregular testimony. Yohanan b. Nuri and Dosa b. Harkinas oppose such practice and are supplied with identical language. At no point in either B-D or E-I does anyone deny or even question the patriarch's authority to proclaim the dates of festivals. The addition of Joshua's comment at I does not change matters; the issue still is not who decides but how one decides. At J this matter is dropped, never to be resolved, and the focus of concern abruptly shifts to the question of patriarchal authority. The issue is not who is right but who is in charge. Gamaliel commands Joshua to violate what the latter regards as the correct Day of Atonement.

Aqiba's appearance at K-M is a surprise. He plays no role in the disagreement, and his apparent support of the patriarch on this matter conflicts with the testimony of M. R.H. 1:6, in which he attempts to prevent witnesses from testifying before him. K-M obviously is an intrusion into the narrative.

According to N, Joshua goes to Dosa. The identity of the speaker at O-P is unclear, but H. Albeck supposes it to be Dosa. This reading is questionable, since the ruling against Gamaliel is attributed to Dosa, not Joshua. Q-S complete the narrative. The actor at Q must be Joshua, for the language at Q is identical to that of J. At R-S, Gamaliel appears the magnanimous victor.

The uncertain identity of the speaker at O calls attention to Joshua's place in the story. His name and words appear only once, at I, where he affirms Dosa's judgment. After that, he becomes an invisible figure whose presence is never made explicit. Talmudic literature contains many accounts of Joshua's opposition to Gamaliel, the most famous of which tells of Gamaliel's deposition from the patriarchate. In such cases, Joshua typically propounds his own opinion, which is reported in his own name. His role here, then, is highly unusual, and this suggests that his name has been inserted into an earlier account of a Gamaliel-Dosa dispute. Dosa b. Harkinas is an obscure figure who appears only eleven times in the Mishnah. At M. Ket. 13:1–2, however, he sides with priestly authority in civil matters, and after 70 C.E., he may have represented priestly claims in religious matters as well. If so, then the earlier account on which this version is based, something like E-G, J, and Q, would have been a straightforward story about Gamaliel's dominance of the priestly party after 70. If this be the case, then the addition of Joshua and Aqiba to the account has preserved the plot of the original, something difficult to alter if the earlier version were well known, but the addition has dramatically redirected the implications of the plot. This analysis, which is necessarily speculative because of the nature of the sources, shows the difficulty of constructing the historical background of Rabbinic texts. Even if accurate, it does not explain what the narrative is about. Let us return to the story in its present form and read it as a whole.

In a conventional narrative about Gamaliel, G would precede F, on the model of B-D. The reversal of those elements here establishes that the point at issue is Gamaliel's ruling. At G, Dosa demurs, and the graphic imagery supplied at -H, a common Rabbinic expression, adds bite to his judgment. Gamaliel cannot be right. At I, Joshua endorses Dosa's view, to be made the object of Gamaliel's displeasure at J. The point of J is clear; Gamaliel's decree is a blatant exercise of authority. At K, Aqiba enters to find Joshua "upset." Early Rabbinic stories normally eschew such nonessential detail, so the description of Joshua's mood is uncharacteristic. Its presence here highlights the dispute and fixes the context for Joshua's action at the end of the story. Aqiba supports Gamaliel at I-M with the exegesis of Lev. 23:4, but he endorses Gamaliel's position as patriarch, not his opinion. Indeed, the exegesis at M makes clear that Gamaliel is wrong. If the appointed seasons were observed "in their time," that is, properly, there would be no reason to apply the verse. Aqiba takes the verse to mean that Israel's appointed seasons are only those proclaimed by human agency, and, since Gamaliel is the recognized leader of the rabbis, what he "has done is done," whether or not it conforms to the times revealed by nature. Aqiba's conclusion is presented as the result

of intellection; it is something he has been "able to learn."

N-P contains the exchange between Joshua and Dosa, but the identity of the speaker is unclear. In the flow of the narrative the words at P make better sense if said by Joshua than to him. Since, at K-L, Aqiba "went" and "said," N-O ought to read likewise. Joshua, therefore, goes to Dosa to withdraw his support and offer his reasons. His rationale and the exegesis of Exod. 24:9 assume the existence of a line of Rabbinic courts that extends back to Moses. If the decision of one court can be held to question, so can the decisions of all courts, an approach that would undermine the coherence and credibility of Rabbinic (self-)government. The issue in O-P, then, is the welfare of the Rabbinic movement, not the objective correctness of Gamaliel's opinion.

At Q-S, Joshua goes to Gamaliel in apparent submission and is received with generosity. Gamaliel rises to greet him, a gesture of respect, and welcomes him warmly. But the words of greeting assigned to him blunt the effect of his victory. Joshua is both "master" and "disciple," at best an ambiguous status. By calling Joshua his "master in wisdom," in the story's context a clear reference only to the halakhic conflict between them, Gamaliel implicitly acknowledges the error of his own decision. Joshua is Gamaliel's "disciple" by virtue of his acceptance of the latter's words, but the exegesis at O-P leaves no doubt that Joshua's "discipleship" is voluntary, motivated neither by fear of nor personal devotion to Gamaliel, nor by regard for his halakhic acumen, but by a concern for the solidarity of Rabbinic collectivity.

In the end it is not clear who has won. Joshua and Gamaliel are both "master" and "disciple" to one another, a relation that blurs any hierarchy. Gamaliel's position remains intact, but his authority results from Joshua's refusal to judge his court, not from Gamaliel's qualities of intellect, charisma, or power. Indeed, it could be argued that the real hero of the narrative is Joshua, and secondarily Aqiba. It is Joshua who is able to suppress his correct opinion for the sake of the collective welfare, and Aqiba who calls the matter to his attention.

Although doubtless grounded in some event of conflict between the new Yavnean patriarch and other rabbis, the story actually says little about it. We do not know where or when the conflict took place and are told nothing of its broader social, religious, or political ramifications. Indeed, its very presence in the Mishnah, in the midst of legal rulings and disputations, suggests that Rabbinic authorities did not want such consequences as part of their record. The protagonists appear in a skeletal paratactic narrative framework that allows characters to be added to the story without altering the plot. They speak in clipped, truncated phrases that may indicate what they think but expose nothing of why they think it. The motives, passions, reasons, and principles that make the confrontation possible are wholly obscured. Finally, from J onwards, the protagonists are identified by pronouns the antecedents of which are not clear. As readers, we cannot be certain who speaks and who listens, but this ambiguity obstructs neither the story's progress nor its intelligibility. At one level, then, although the narrative includes the names of Gamaliel, Dosa, Aqiba and Joshua, it really is about no one in particular. Its images consequently tell us less about life as lived than about life as imagined.

But if this story tells us little about history as we would like to know it, it does reveal much about the contours and values of Rabbinic culture and religion. It portrays rabbis as imagining themselves to be the heirs and, for their own time, equivalents of Moses. To judge one of their courts is, of necessity, to judge the court of Moses. Rabbis, not God, fix the boundaries of sacred time, and God has "no other appointed seasons but these." The story exposes a powerful recognition that the rabbis are creating something new in their culture, something they, not God, are responsible to maintain. The persistence of that creation depends on the voluntary cooperation and mutuality of numbers of rabbis and can be destroyed by contrary attitudes and behaviors. In such a context no rabbi can appear to dominate others, and disputes among rabbis must be resolved without humiliation to any party. In this narrative,

the medium for such resolution is the exercise of intellect. Joshua changes his mind neither because he fears Gamaliel's power nor because he respects the person of Aqiba. He does so because of the exegesis Aqiba has "learned." In idealized Rabbinic life, it is through the discipline of "learning" that the sharp and projecting edges of individuality and ego are blunted, controlled, and directed in pursuit of some larger goal.

The attempt to describe the rabbis of antiquity yields a result disappointing for conventional history but fruitful for the study of culture. The virtual anonymity of persons in Rabbinic literature reveals a powerful cultural disinclination, perhaps an incapacity, to construe Rabbinic culture and religion as the work of powerful individuals. It is as if, when they came to put their story down on paper, rabbis could not bring themselves to tell it and therefore were unable to imagine it in terms of themselves. In Rabbinic documents there is no place for the expression of private ego, no room for the imposing, charismatic personality, and no occasion for the emergence of any single, great man who represents the fate and destiny of the many in his own life and person.

The content of Rabbinic documents virtually certifies that they were produced for an internal audience. They are of rabbis, by rabbis, and for rabbis; they constitute a Rabbinic conception of Rabbinic culture, composed for itself and addressed to itself. Rabbinic texts present their contents, whether halakhic teaching or images of persons, in pieces, in fluid literary frameworks that exhibit little temporal dimension. Rabbinic discourse shields itself from intellectual penetration by others; it is the work of a group bounded and set apart. It would be derelict to claim that these texts existed in precisely their present form throughout Rabbinic antiquity. The diachronic range of most documents indicates that their production is not contemporary with the events described and the persons depicted in their pages. But it also is gratuitous to argue that the present form of the texts is unrelated to or at variance with the ways their contents initially were composed, received, transmitted and redacted. Rather, the generations of rabbis who produced, preserved accepted, and believed the materials contained in Rabbinic documents apparently found this mode of depicting reality credible. Unless we suppose all of Rabbinic writing to be one massive literary artifice, we must assume that to some degree the texts reflect and conform to rabbis' experience of and in the world.

This proposition can be tested by a consideration of some aspects of Rabbinic social life. Unfortunately, Rabbinic social life in Palestine after 200 remains substantially unexplored. But in Sasanian Babylonia,[2]as well as in the land of Israel in Roman times,[3] Rabbinic instruction was effected through disciple-circles rather than schools. Rabbinic disciples, that is, apparently did not attend institutions with corporate identities but clustered, rather, around individual masters whom they served, at least in part, as apprentice lawyers. Rabbinic disciples could change teachers either for intellectual or personal reasons. While masters could be abusive and demanding, some attracted students through special expertise in particular subjects.

The picture of a network of relatively autonomous disciple-circles suggests that in order to attract students rabbis had to be figures of forceful personality and distinctive individuality. But the very possibility that students could change teachers at will, the apparent movement of disciples among masters, implies a system of social relations in which rabbis theoretically were equivalent to one another. In a world of face-to-face relationships in which rabbis had to compete with one another for students, no master could fail to be aware of his colleagues' skills, none could escape public scrutiny within the movement. In such a system, individual claims to special power and authority are easily refuted and rendered fragile.

Hints that the realities of Rabbinic social life restrained Rabbinic claims to special power and encouraged the literary suppression of individuality also appear in the rabbis' treatment of themselves as miracle-workers. During the first two centuries, charismatic types who claimed miraculous powers were antithetical to and played little

role in Rabbinism. God could perform miracles, but rabbis could not. By the middle of the third century, that picture had changed, and miracle-power became a conventional component in the rabbinical dossier. This shift corresponds to a general development among religious virtuosi in the late Roman world. The third century is witness to the emergence of a class of charismatic individuals, holy men, "friends of God," who claim a special power, an intimate relation with the divine, that definitively sets them off from other men.

In late antique Christianity and paganism, this claim accompanies a vigorous expression of individuality and is recounted, in individual lives, in the literary portraiture of hagiography. In Rabbinism, however, miracle-working does not generate hagiography and appears not to have had the socially disruptive effects it did in pagan and Christian manifestations. This failure of Rabbinism to adopt the pagan and Christian model and portray itself in terms of great and powerful individuals is partly a function of the social system sketched above. But it also is a consequence of the distinctly intellectual character of the Rabbinic enterprise. Whatever personal traits, magnetism, or charisma a rabbi possessed, his standing and credibility within the Rabbinic movement initially depended on his learning. Rabbinical status derived not from the exercise of mysterious and arbitrary divine favor but from the result of intellectual labor. Whatever else being a rabbi meant, it meant the publicly demonstrable mastery of a considerable body of Scripture and halakhic material. Rabbis did not hide from one another in the desert, nor did they seclude themselves behind cloister walls. The evidence of the sources suggests that they lived in a world of persistent mutual scrutiny, a world of continual evaluation and judgment. In such a world, rabbis could not help but be aware of their mortality and could not possibly maintain the illusion of special power, at least, and especially, among themselves.

What, then, can we know overall of the Rabbinic class of antiquity? The rabbis constituted a recognized group of intellectual specialists in ancient Jewish society. By their own description, they developed a set of behavioral patterns that set them off from ordinary people and apparently were designed to identify them as a distinct group. The following Talmudic narrative, at B. Qid. 70a-b, illustrates both the rabbis' claims to use special vocabulary and the potential consequences of their words:

A. There was a man from Nehardea who went into a butcher shop in Pumbedita. He said to them, "Give me meat."
B. They said to him, "Wait until the servant of R. Judah bar Ezekiel gets his, and then we'll give to you."
C. He said, "So who is this Judah bar Sheviskel who comes before me to get served before me?"
D. They went and told R. Judah.
E. He excommunicated him.
F. They said, "He is in the habit of calling people slaves."
G. He proclaimed concerning him, "He is a slave."
H. The other party went and sued him in court before R. Nahman.
I. When the summons came, R. Judah went to R. Huna, he said to him, "Should I go, or shouldn't I go?"
J. He said to him, "In point of fact, you really don't have to go, because you are an eminent authority. But on account of the honor owing to the household of the patriarch [of the Babylonian Jews], get up and go."
K. He came. He found him making a parapet.
L. He said to him, "Doesn't the master concur with what R. Huna bar Idi said Samuel said, 'Once a man is appointed administrator of the community, it is forbidden for him to do servile labor before three persons'?"
M. He said to him, "I'm just making a little piece of the balustrade."
N. He said to him, "So what's so bad about the word, 'parapet,' that the Torah uses, or the word 'partition,' that rabbis use?"
O. He said to him, "Will the master sit down on a seat?"
P. He said to him, "So what's so bad about 'chair,' which rabbis use, or the word 'stool,' which people generally use?"
Q. He said to him, "Will the master eat a piece of citron-fruit?"
R. He said to him, "This is what Samuel said, 'Whoever uses the word "citron-fruit" is a third puffed up with pride.' It should be called either etrog, as the rabbis do, or 'lemony-thing,' as people do."
S. He said to him, "Would the master like to drink a goblet of wine?"

T. He said to him, "So what's so bad about the word 'wineglass,' as rabbis say, or 'a drink,' as people say?"
U. He said to him, "Let my daughter Dunag bring something to drink?"
V. He said to him, "This is what Samuel said, 'People are not to make use of a woman.'"
W. "But she's only a minor!"
X. "In so many words said Samuel, 'People are not to make use of a woman in any manner, whether adult or minor.'"
Y. "Would the master care to send a greeting to my wife, Yalta?"
Z. He said to him, "This is what Samuel said, 'Even the sound of a woman's voice is [forbidden as] lustful.'"
AA. "Maybe through a messenger?"
BB. He said to him, "This is what Samuel said, 'People are not to inquire after a woman's health.'"
CC. "Through her husband?!"
DD. He said to him, "This is what Samuel said, 'People are not to inquire after a woman's health in any way, shape, or form.'"
EE. His wife sent word to him, "Settle the man's case for him, so that he not make you like any other fool."
FF. He said to him, "So what brings you here?"
GG. He said to him, "You sent me a subpoena." He said to him, "Now if even the language of the master I don't know, how in the world could I have sent you a subpoena?!"
HH. He produced the summons from his bosom and showed it to him: "Here is the man, here is the subpoena!"
II. He said to him, "Well, anyhow, since the master has come here, let's discuss the matter, so people should not say that rabbis are showing favoritism to one another."
JJ. He said to him, "How come the master has excommunicated that man?" "He harassed a messenger of the rabbis."
KK. "So why didn't the master flog him, for Rab would flog someone who harassed a messenger of the rabbis?"
LL. "I did worse to him."
MM. "How come the master declared the man that he was a slave?"
NN. "Because he went around calling other people slaves, and there is a Tannaite statement: Whoever alleges that others are genealogically invalid is himself invalid and never says a good thing about other people. And said Samuel, 'By reference to a flaw in himself he invalidates others.'"
OO. "Well, I can concede that Samuel said to suspect such a man of such a genealogy, but did he really say to make a public declaration to that effect?"
PP. In the meanwhile, the litigant from Nehardea came along. Said that litigant to R. Judah, "You called me a slave, I, who descend from the royal house of the Hasmoneans!"
QQ. He said to him, "This is what Samuel said, 'Whoever says that he comes from the house of the Hasmoneans is in fact a slave.'"
RR. [Nahman] said to him, "Doesn't the master concur with what R. Abba said R. Huna said Rab said, 'Any disciple of a sage who teaches a law, if it is prior to the case that he said it, [his teaching] is listened to, but if not, it is not listened to'?"
SS. He said to him, "Well, there's R. Mattenah, who concurs with me." Now R. Mattenah had not seen the town of Nehardea for thirteen years, but on that very day, he paid a visit. Said [Judah] to him, "Does the master remember what Samuel said when he was standing with one foot on the bank and one foot on the bridge?"
TT. He said to him, "This is what Samuel said, 'Whoever says that he comes from the house of the Hasmoneans is in fact a slave, for of that family survived only one woman, who climbed up to the roof and shouted in a loud voice, "Whoever says that he comes from the house of the Hasmoneans is in fact a slave." She then fell from the roof and died.'" So they issued a proclamation concerning the litigant that he was a slave.
UU. Now, on that day, many marriage contracts were ripped up in Nehardea. So when R. Judah came out, they came out after him to stone him. He said to them, "So if you'll shut up, just shut up, but if not, I'm going to tell concerning you what Samuel said, namely, 'There are two families in Nehardea, the household of the dove and the household of the raven, and the mnemonic is: The unclean is unclean, the clean, clean.'"
VV. So they tossed away their stones, and that made a dam in the royal canal.
WW. [Then] R. Judah declared in Pumbedita, "Adda and Jonathan are slaves, Judah bar Pappa is a *mamzer*, Bati bar Butiah arrogantly refused to accept a writ of manumission."
XX. Raba proclaimed in Mahoza, "The households of Bela, Dena, Tela, Mela, and Zega all are unfit."
YY. R. Judah said, "The household of Guba are Gibeonites; Durunita is a village made of Netins."

ZZ. Said R. Joseph, "The household of Kubi in Pumbedita is made up entirely of slaves."

Despite the rabbis' claims to control Israel's destiny, they lacked the political power to direct their society or to enforce the myriad laws and scriptural interpretations they believed held the key to redemption. Their literature's manifest lack of interest in that society suggests its reciprocal lack of interest in them. In the absence of real power, rabbis exerted what influence they could but devoted themselves primarily to forging their own collective identity. The bulk of their literature is recondite and insular, bespeaking the shared privacy of the initiated. Its obsession with detailed scriptural exegesis and halakhic disputation means that rabbis needed each other as an audience. Their sense of social credibility and group membership, therefore, in large measure depended on how they treated one another. To alienate a colleague by arrogance, humiliation, or claims to special power was to risk losing an audience and consigning the work of collective identity to failure.

The search for the rabbis of antiquity suggests a degree of conformity among the ways rabbis lived with one another, imagined one another, and represented one another in their literature. It leads not into the lives and careers of great men but into a self-absorbed community of intellectuals who competed with each other but needed each other and strove to maintain at least the illusion of each other's dignity.

WILLIAM SCOTT GREEN

NOTES

[1] Richard Kalmin, *Sages, Stories, Authors, and Editors in Rabbinic Babylonia* (Atlanta, 1994), p. 198.

[2] David M. Goodblatt, *Rabbinic Instruction in Sasanian Babylonia* (Leiden, 1975).

[3] Martin Goodman, *State and Society in Roman Palestine: 120–200* (Totowa, 1985).

Rabbinic Judaism, Formative Canon of, I: Defining the Canon

THE Judaism of the dual Torah, which took shape in the first seven centuries C.E., rests upon its adherents conception of Torah, meaning revelation. The literature produced by the rabbis is understood to form a part of that Torah, and this literature therefore is highly valued. Because it is part of the Torah, that is, in its Judaism, Rabbinic literature is important. In the Torah God reveals ("gives") God's self-manifestation in one aspect: God's will, expressed in particular in an account of the covenant between God and Israel. That refers to the identification of the contracting parties, on the one side, and what the covenant entails for the life of Israel with God, on the other. That is the religious context defined by the Judaism of the dual Torah in which the literature of Rabbinic Judaism is written, valued and studied.

While it is only one among several Judaic systems of antiquity, the Judaism of the dual Torah set forth the most important canon of a Judaism to emerge from ancient times. For it is the Judaism that proved normative from its formative centuries to our own day, and it produced most of the Judaic systems that now flourish. That Judaism, drawing upon older materials of course, beginning with the Old Testament itself, finds its definitive symbol in the Torah, written and oral. Its distinctive myth appeals to the story that at Sinai God revealed revelation, or "Torah," to Moses in two media. One medium for revelation was in writing, hence "the written Torah," *Torah shebikhtab*, corresponding to the Old Testament of Christianity. The other medium for revelation was through oral formulation and oral transmission, hence through memorization, yielding "the oral Torah," *Torah shebe'al peh*, the memorized Torah. The Judaism of the dual Torah bestows upon its authorities, or sages, the title of "rabbi," hence is called Rabbinic Judaism; it appeals for its ultimate authority to the Talmud of Babylonia, or Bavli, hence is called talmudic Judaism; it enjoys the status of orthodoxy, hence is

called "normative" or "classical" Judaism. Today, the Rabbinic literature valued as canonical by the Judaism of the dual Torah forms the court of final appeal to all Judaisms, from Orthodoxy both integrationist and segregationist, to Reform, Conservative, Reconstructionist, and all other known Judaic systems of a religious character. Each invokes in its own way and for its own purposes the received writings of the Judaism of the dual Torah.

The Concept of a Holy Book in the Judaism of the Dual Torah

The literature of Rabbinic Judaism therefore takes its place as a component of that Torah: part of God's revelation to Israel. But it is only one of the three parts that comprise the Torah. In the Judaism of the dual Torah, the Torah is set forth and preserved in three media, [1] a book, the Hebrew Scriptures or Old Testament, [2] a memorized oral tradition, first written down in the Mishnah, ca. 200 C.E., and other ancient documents, and [3] the model of a sage who embodies in the here and now the paradigm of Moses, called a rabbi. Other Judaic systems identified other holy books, in addition to Scripture, for their canon. The canon of Rabbinic Judaism is only one, distinct and autonomous corpus of writings; other Judaisms defined their own canons in accord with their systems' requirements. Each canon then recapitulated its system and no other.

That is to say, since in antiquity, as in modern times, diverse sets of books have been defined as the canon of one Judaism or another, we recognize at the outset a simple fact. No single, unitary, linear "Judaism" ever existed, from the beginnings to the present, defining an "orthodoxy." Quite to the contrary, a variety of Judaisms—Judaic systems, comprising a way of life, world view, and definition of a social entity, an "Israel"—have flourished. Comparison of one Judaic system with another shows that each is autonomous and freestanding. Each Judaic system appeals to its distinctive symbolic structure, explains itself by invoking its particular myth, sets forth its indicative way of life, accounts for its way of life by appealing to its own world view. The Judaic system revealed by Philo side by side with the one preserved in the Essene library found at the Dead Sea, or the Judaic system presented by the ancient rabbis with the Judaic system defined by the Pentateuchal editors in the fifth century B.C.E., makes the point quite clear. Harmonizing all of the diverse Judaisms into a single Judaism imposes a theological construct upon diverse and discrete historical facts. Since (except in the theological context) there never has been a single, "orthodox", unitary and harmonious "Judaism," against which all "heterodox" or "heretical" Judaisms have to be judged, we recognize that each Judaism is to be described in its own terms, meaning, in the context of its literature or other enduring evidences.

The concept of a sacred text in the Judaism of the dual Torah therefore finds definition in the myth of the dual Torah. In fact, all components of that Torah are secondary. What comes first is the myth of the memorized Torah, what follows is the identification of the documents that enjoy the status of components of that memorized Torah. The Judaism of the dual Torah by definition does not find its definition in a book—e.g., the Old Testament. Its generative principle is quite the opposite: God did not resort solely to a book to convey and preserve the divine message. It was through teachings, which could be transmitted in more than a single form. Consequently, a way lay open to encompass more than the Old Testament as Torah, and, indeed, in late antiquity, Torah found ample room not only for truth formulated in words—whether written down or memorized—but also for gestures, indeed, also for persons. Consequently the sage could be received as a Torah and treated as such.

An important and simple statement of that fact will prove the point. A sage himself was equivalent to a scroll of the Torah—a material, legal comparison, not merely a symbolic metaphor.

> A. He who sees a disciple of a sage who has died is as if he sees a scroll of the Torah that has been burned.
>
> Y. M.Q. 3:7.X.

I. R. Jacob bar Abayye in the name of R. Aha: "An elder who forgot his learning because of some accident which happened to him—they treat him with the sanctity owed to an ark [of the Torah]."

Y. M.Q. 3:1.XI.

The sage therefore is represented as equivalent to the scroll of the Torah, and, turning the statement around, the scroll of the Torah is realized in the person of the sage. The conception is not merely figurative or metaphorical, for, in both instances, actual behavior was affected. Still more to the point, what the sage *did* had the status of law; the sage was the model of the law, thus once again enjoyed the standing of the human embodiment of the Torah. Since the sage exercised supernatural power as a kind of living Torah, his very deeds served to reveal law, as much as his word expressed revelation. That is a formidable component of the argument that the sage embodied the Torah, another way of saying that the Torah was incarnated in the person of the sage.

The capacity of the sage himself to participate in the process of revelation is illustrated in two types of materials. First of all, tales told about rabbis' behavior on specific occasions immediately are translated into rules for the entire community to keep. Accordingly, he was a source not merely of good example but of prescriptive law.

X. R. Aha went to Emmaus, and he ate dumpling [prepared by Samaritans].
Y. R. Jeremiah ate leavened bread prepared by them.
Z. R. Hezekiah ate their locusts prepared by them.
AA. R. Abbahu prohibited Israelite use of wine prepared by them.

Y. A.Z. 5:4.III

Along with hundreds of parallels in the Rabbinic literature, these reports of what rabbis had said and done enjoyed the same authority as citations of traditions in the names of the great authorities of old or of the day. What someone did served as a norm, if the person was a sage of sufficient standing. The precedent entered the Torah, and what a sage said became part of the oral component of the one whole Torah that God gave to Moses at Sinai. That is the mythic premise on which these and similar stories are told and preserved.

It follows that the Judaism of the dual Torah is not a religion of a book, though that Judaism does venerate books as well as orally formulated and orally transmitted teachings. The reason is that that Judaism does not take form solely through sacred texts. It is not a religion that appeals to a book for its authority and definition of truth. It appeals to truth that is preserved in diverse media, books, words preserved not in books but in memorized formulas, and, finally, the lives, gestures, and deeds of holy persons. It follows that the Judaism of the dual Torah appeals not solely to texts, oral or written, and it is assuredly not a religion that derives from a book in particular. It is a religion that receives its revelation in a variety of media, and, by definition, it is therefore not a religion of a book. But it does refer to a canon, which serves to recapitulate the system just now adumbrated. Let us rapidly survey the canonical writings that comprise Rabbinic literature.

Defining the Canon of Rabbinic Literature

A simple definition follows from what has been said. Rabbinic literature is the corpus of writing produced in the first seven centuries C.E. by sages who claimed to stand in the chain of tradition from Sinai and uniquely to possess the oral part of the Torah, revealed by God to Moses at Sinai for oral formulation and oral transmission. This they possessed in addition to the written part of the Torah possessed by all Israel. Among the many, diverse documents produced by Jews in the first seven centuries C.E., only a small group cohere and form a distinctive corpus, called "Rabbinic literature." Three traits together suffice to distinguish Rabbinic literature from all other Jewish (ethnic) and Judaic (religious) writing of that age:

[1] These writings of law and exegesis, revered as holy books, copiously cite the Hebrew Scriptures of ancient Israel ("written Torah").

[2] They acknowledge the authority, and even the existence, of no other Judaic (or gentile) books but the ancient Israelite Scriptures.
[3] These writings promiscuously and ubiquitously cite sayings attributed to named authorities, unique to those books themselves, most of them bearing the title "rabbi."

Other Judaic writings ordinarily qualify under the first plank of the definition, and the same is to be said for Christian counterparts. The second element in the definition excludes all Christian documents. The third dismisses all writings of all Judaisms other than the one of the dual Torah. Other Judaisms' writings cite Scriptural heroes or refer to a particular authority; none except those of this Judaism sets forth, as does every Rabbinic document, extensive accounts of what a large number of diverse authorities say, let alone disputes among them. "Rabbinic" is therefore an appropriate qualifier for this Judaism, since what distinguishes it from all other is the character of its authorities (the matter of title being a mere detail) and the myth that accounts for its distinctive character.

Any book out of Judaic antiquity that exhibits these three traits—focus upon law and exegesis of the Hebrew Scriptures, exclusion of all prior tradition except for Scripture, and appealing to named sages called rabbis, falls into the category of Rabbinic literature. All other Jewish writings in varying proportions exhibit the first trait, and some the second as well, but none all three. It goes without saying that no named authority in any Rabbinic writing, except for scriptural ones, occurs in any other Judaic document in antiquity (excluding Gamaliel in Acts), or in another Jewish one either (excluding Simeon b. Gamaliel in Josephus's histories).

Having defined the traits that distinguish all Rabbinic documents from non-Rabbinic ones, let us examine the characteristics that distinguish the documents within the Rabbinic corpus. Rabbinic literature is divided into two large parts, each part formed as a commentary to a received part of the Torah, one oral, the other written. The written part requires no attention here: it is simply Scripture (Hebrew: "the written Torah," TaNaKH, Torah, Nebiim, Ketubim, a.k.a. "the Old Testament" part of the Bible). The oral part begins with the Mishnah, a philosophical law code that reached closure at the end of the second century C.E. Promulgated under the sponsorship of the Roman-appointed Jewish authority of the Land of Israel ("Palestine"), Judah the Patriarch, the Mishnah formed the first document of Rabbinic literature and therefore of the Judaic system, "Rabbinic Judaism," or "the Judaism of the dual Torah," that took shape in this period. The attributed statements of its authorities, named sages or rabbis called Tannaites ("repeaters," "memorizers," for the form in which the sayings were formulated and transmitted), enjoyed the standing of traditions beginning at Sinai. Numerous anonymous sayings, alongside the attributed ones and bearing upon the same controverted questions, appear as well.

The Mishnah and the Exegetical Tradition of the Oral Torah

Comprising six divisions, dealing with agriculture, holy seasons, women and family affairs, civil law and politics, everyday offerings, and cultic purity, the Mishnah served as the written code of the Patriarch's administration in the Land of Israel, and of that of his counterpart, the Exilarch, in Iranian-ruled Babylonia as well. Alongside the Mishnah's compilation of sages' sayings into well-crafted divisions, tractates, and chapters, other sayings of the same authorities circulated, some of them finding their way, marked as deriving from Tannaite authority, into three exegetical documents that formed around parts of the Mishnah. These were, specifically:

[1] the Tosefta, a compilation of supplementary sayings organized around nearly the whole of the Mishnah as citation and gloss, secondary paraphrase, and freestanding complement thereto, of no determinate date but probably concluded about a century after the closure of the Mishnah, hence ca. 300.
[2] the Talmud of the Land of Israel (Yerushalmi), which reached closure in ca. 400, a commentary to most of the tractates of the Mishnah's first four divisions,

[3] the Talmud of Babylonia (Bavli), concluded in ca. 600, providing a sustained exegesis to most of the tractates of the Mishnah's second through fifth divisions.

The Tosefta's materials occasionally form the basis for exegetical compositions in the two Talmuds, but the second Talmud's framers know nothing about the compositions, let alone compositions, of the prior Talmud, even though they frequently do cite sayings attributed to authorities of the Land of Israel as much as of Babylonia. So the line of the exegesis and extension of the Mishnah extends through the Tosefta and then to the two, autonomous Talmuds.

Scripture and the Exegetical Tradition of the Written Torah

Parts of the written Torah attracted sustained commentary as well, and, altogether, these commentaries, called Midrash-compilations, form the counterpart to the writings of Mishnah-exegesis. It should be noted that both Talmuds, in addition, contain large composites of Midrash-exegesis, but they are not organized around books or large selections of Scripture. The part of Rabbinic literature that takes Scripture, rather than the Mishnah, as its organizing structure covers the Pentateuchal books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, and some of the writings important in synagogue liturgy, particularly Ruth, Esther, Lamentations, and Song of Songs, all read on special occasions in the sacred calendar. Numbering for late antiquity twelve compilations in all, the earliest compilations of exegesis, called midrash, were produced in the third century, the latest in the sixth or seventh.

Sages and the Exemplary Torah

There is a third type of writing in Rabbinic literature, which concerns teachings of sages on theological and moral questions. This comprises a very small, freestanding corpus, tractate Abot ("the fathers," or founders) and Abot deRabbi Nathan ("the fathers according to Rabbi Nathan"). The former collects sayings of sages, and the later contributes in addition stories about them. But the bulk of Rabbinic literature consists of works of exegesis of the Mishnah and Scripture, which is to say, the principal documents of the Torah, oral and written respectively. But throughout the documents of the oral Torah also are collected compositions and large compilations that are devoted to the sayings and exemplary deeds of named sages. No documents took shape to be made up out of that kind of writing, which, nonetheless, was abundant.

Mishnah and Midrash, *Halakhah* and *Aggadah*

Viewed as a whole, therefore, we see that the stream of exegesis of the Mishnah and exploration of its themes of law and philosophy flowed side by side with exegesis of Scripture. Since the Mishnah concerns itself with normative rules of behavior, it and the documents of exegesis flowing from it ordinarily are comprised of discussion of matters of law, or, in Hebrew, *halakhah*. Much of the exegesis of Scripture in the Midrash-compilations concerns itself with norms of belief, right attitude, virtue and proper motivation. Encased in narrative form, these teachings of an ethical and moral character are called *aggadah*, or lore.

Midrash-exegesis of Israelite Scripture in no way was particular to the Rabbinic literature. To the contrary, the exegesis of the Hebrew Scriptures had defined a convention of all systems of Judaism from before the conclusion of Scripture itself; no one, including the sages who stand behind Rabbinic literature, began anywhere but in the encounter with the Written Torah. But collecting and organizing documents of exegeses of Scripture in a systematic way developed in a quite distinct circumstance.

For Rabbinic literature, the circumstance was defined by the requirement of Mishnah-exegesis. The Mishnah's character itself defined a principal task of Scripture-exegesis. Standing by itself, providing few proof texts to Scripture to back up its rules, the Mishnah bore no explanation of why Israel should obey its rules. Brought into relationship to Scriptures, by contrast, the Mishnah gained

access to the source of authority by definition operative in Israel, the Jewish people. Accordingly, the work of relating the Mishnah's rules to those of Scripture got under way alongside the formation of the Mishnah's rules themselves. It follows that explanations of the sense of the document, including its authority and sources, would draw attention to the written part of the Torah.

We may classify the Midrash-compilations in three successive groups: exegetical, propositional, and exegetical-propositional (theological).

[1] Exegetical Discourse and the Pentateuch

One important dimension of the earliest documents of Scripture-exegesis, the Midrash-compilations that deal with Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, measures the distance between the Mishnah and Scripture and aims to close it. The question is persistently addressed in analyzing Scripture: precisely how does a rule of the Mishnah relate to, or rest upon, a rule of Scripture? That question demanded an answer, so that the status of the Mishnah's rules and, right alongside, of the Mishnah itself could find a clear definition. The collecting and arranging of exegeses of Scripture as these related to passages of the Mishnah first reached literary form in Sifra, to Leviticus, and in two books, both called Sifré, one to Numbers, the other Deuteronomy. All three compositions accomplished much else. For, even at that early stage, exegeses of passages of Scripture in their own context and not only for the sake of Mishnah-exegesis attracted attention. But a principal motif in all three books concerned the issue of Mishnah-Scripture relationships.

A second, still more fruitful path in formulating Midrash-clarifications of Scripture also emerged from the labor of Mishnah-exegesis. As the work of Mishnah-exegesis got under way, in the third century, exegetes of the Mishnah and others alongside undertook a parallel labor. They took an interest in reading Scripture in the way in which they were reading the Mishnah itself. That is to say, they began to work through verses of Scripture in exactly the same way—word for word, phrase for phrase, line for line—in which, to begin with, the exegetes of the Mishnah pursued the interpretation and explanation of the Mishnah. Precisely the types of exegesis that dictated the way in which sages read the Mishnah now guided their reading of Scripture as well. And, as people began to collect and organize comments in accord with the order of sentences and paragraphs of the Mishnah, they found the stimulation to collect and organize comments on clauses and verses of Scripture. This kind of verse-by-verse exegetical work got under way in the Sifra and the two Sifrés, but reached fulfillment in Genesis Rabbah, which presents a line-for-line reading of the book of Genesis. Characteristic of the narrowly-exegetical phase of Midrash-compilation is the absence of a single, governing proposition, running through the details. It is not possible, for example, to state the main point, expressed through countless cases, in Sifra or Sifré to Deuteronomy.

[2] From Exegesis to Proposition

A further group of Midrash-compilations altogether transcends the limits of formal exegesis. Beyond these two modes of exegesis—search for the sources of the Mishnah in Scripture, line-by-line reading of Scripture as of the Mishnah—lies yet a third, an approach we may call "writing with Scripture," meaning, using verses of Scripture in a context established by a propositional program independent of Scripture itself. To understand it, we have to know how the first of the two Talmuds read the Mishnah. The Yerushalmi's authors not only explained phrases or sentences of the Mishnah in the manner of Mishnah- and Scripture-exegetes. They also investigated the principles and large-scale conceptual problems of the document and of the law given only in cases in the Mishnah itself. That is to say, they dealt not alone with a given topic, a subject and its rule, the cases that yield the rule, but with an encompassing problem, a principle and its implications for a number of topics and rules.

This far more discursive and philosoph-

ical mode of thought produced for Mishnah-exegesis sustained essays on principles cutting across specific rules. Predictably, this same intellectual work extended from the Mishnah to Scripture. Exegesis of Scripture that focused on words, phrases, and sentences produced discursive essays on great principles or problems of theology and morality. Discursive exegesis is represented, to begin with, in Leviticus Rabbah, a document that reached closure, people generally suppose, sometime after Genesis Rabbah, thus ca. 450 and that marked the shift from verse-by-verse to syllogistic reading of verses of Scripture. It was continued in Pesiqta deRab Kahana, organized around themes pertinent to various holy days through the liturgical year, and Pesiqta Rabbati, a derivative and imitative work.

Typical of discursive exegesis of Scripture, Leviticus Rabbah presents not phrase-by-phrase systematic exegeses of verses in the book of Leviticus, but a set of thirty-seven topical essays. These essays, syllogistic in purpose, take the form of citations and comments on verses of Scripture to be sure. But the compositions range widely over the far reaches of the Hebrew Scriptures while focusing narrowly upon a given theme. They moreover make quite distinctive points about that theme. Their essays constitute compositions, not merely composites. Whether devoted to God's favor to the poor and humble or to the dangers of drunkenness, the essays, exegetical in form, discursive in character, correspond to the equivalent, legal essays, amply represented in the Yerushalmi. The framers of Pesiqta deRab Kahana carried forward a still more abstract and discursive mode of discourse, one in which verses of Scripture play a subordinated role to the framing of an implicit syllogism, which predominates throughout, both formally and in argument.

[3] Saying One Thing Through Many Things

Writing with Scripture reached its climax in the theological Midrash-compilations formed at the end of the development of Rabbinic literature. A fusion of the two approaches to Midrash-exegesis, the verse-by-verse amplification of successive chapters of Scripture and the syllogistic presentation of propositions, arguments, and proofs deriving from the facts of Scripture, was accomplished in the third body of Midrash-compilations: Ruth Rabbah, Esther Rabbah Part I, Lamentations Rabbah, and Song of Songs Rabbah. Here we find the verse-by-verse reading of scriptural books. But at the same time, a highly propositional program governs the exegesis, each of the compilations meaning to prove a single, fundamental theological point through the accumulation of detailed comments.

Halakhah and Aggadah, Mishnah and Midrash in a Single Definitive Document

The Talmud of Babylonia, or Bavli, which was the final document of Rabbinic literature also formed the climax and conclusion of the entire canon and defined this Judaism from its time to the present. The Talmud of Babylonia forms the conclusion and the summary of Rabbinic literature, the most important document of the entire collection. One of its principal traits is the fusion of Mishnah- and Scripture-exegesis in a single compilation. The authors of units of discourse collected in the Talmud of Babylonia or Bavli drew together the two, up-to-then distinct, modes of organizing thought, either around the Mishnah or around Scripture. They treated both Torahs, oral and written, as equally available in the work of organizing large-scale exercises of sustained inquiry. So we find in the Bavli a systematic treatment of some tractates of the Mishnah. And within the same aggregates of discourse, we also find (in somewhat smaller proportion to be sure, roughly 60% to roughly 40% in a sample made of three tractates) a second principle of organizing and redaction. That principle dictates that ideas be laid out in line with verses of Scripture, themselves dealt with in cogent sequence, one by one, just as the Mishnah's sentences and paragraphs come under analysis, in cogent order and one by one.

Dating Rabbinic Documents

While we have no exact dates for the closure of any of the documents of Rabbinic literature—all the dates we have are mere guesses—we have solid grounds on setting them forth in the sequence [1] Mishnah, Tosefta, [2] Yerushalmi, [3] Bavli for the exegetical writings on the Mishnah, and the three corresponding, and successive groups—[1] Sifra and the two Sifrés, [2] Leviticus Rabbah, Pesiqta deRab Kahana, Pesiqta Rabbati, then [3] Ruth Rabbah, Esther Rabbah Part One, Lamentations Rabbah, and Song of Songs Rabbah—for the exegetical writings on Scripture. The basis in the case of the sequence from the Mishnah is citation by one compilation of another, in which case, the cited document is to be dated prior to the document that does the citing. The basis in the case of the sequence from Scripture is less certain; we assign a post-Mishnah date to Sifra and the two Sifrés because of the large-scale citation of the former in the latter. The rest of the sequence given here rests upon presently-accepted and conventional dates and therefore cannot be regarded as final.

Study of the history of Rabbinic Judaism through the literature just now set forth must proceed document by document, in the sequence presently established for their respective dates of closure. In such a study of documentary sequences, e.g., how a given topic or theme is set forth in one writing after another, we learn the order in which ideas came to expression in the canon. We therefore commence at the Mishnah, the starting point of the originally-oral part of the canon. We proceed systematically to work our way through tractate Abot, the Mishnah's first apologetic, then the Tosefta, the Yerushalmi, and the Bavli at the end. Along the same lines, the sequence of Midrash-compilations is to be examined and the results, if possible, correlated with those of the Mishnah and its companions. In tracing the order in which ideas make their appearance, we ask about the components in sequence so far as we can trace the sequence. The traits of documents govern, and the boundaries that separate one from another also distinguish sayings from one another. The upshot is the study of the documents one by one, with emphasis on their distinguishing traits.

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Rabbinic Judaism, Formative Canon of, II: The Halakhic Documents

"Halakhah" refers to laws, norms of conduct, and halakhic documents are those that present rules of correct behavior and belief for holy Israel. These form continuations of the laws that the written Torah sets forth. Many derive from the exegesis and amplification of the laws of the written Torah, some from tradition of Sinai set forth by "our sages of blessed memory." The halakhic documents of the Rabbinic canon are the Mishnah, Tosefta, Talmud of the Land of Israel, and Talmud of Babylonia.

The Mishnah

The Mishnah is a philosophical law code, covering topics of both a theoretical and practical character. It was produced at about 200 C.E. under the sponsorship of Judah, Patriarch (*nasi*) or ethnic ruler of the Jews of the Land of Israel. It comprises sixty-two tractates, divided by topics among six divisions, as follows:

1. Agriculture (Zeraim): Berakhot (Blessings); Peah (the corner of the field); Demai (doubtfully tithed produce); Kilayim (mixed seeds); Shebiit (the seventh year); Terumot (heave offering or priestly rations); Maaserot (tithes); Maaser Sheni (second tithe); Hallah (dough offering); Orlah (produce of trees in the first three years after planting, which is prohibited); and Bikkurim (first fruits).

2. Appointed Times (Moed): Shabbat (the Sabbath); Erubin (the fictive fusion meal or boundary); Pesahim (Passover); Sheqalim

(the Temple tax); Yoma (the Day of Atonement); Sukkah (the festival of Tabernacles); Besah (the preparation of food on the festivals and Sabbath); Rosh Hashshanah (the New Year); Taanit (fast days); Megillah (Purim); Moed Qatan (the intermediate days of the festivals of Passover and Tabernacles); Hagigah (the festal offering).

3. Women (Nashim): Yebamot (the levirate widow); Ketubot (the marriage contract); Nedarim (vows); Nazir (the special vow of the Nazirite); Sotah (the wife accused of adultery); Gittin (writs of divorce); Qiddushin (betrothal).

4. Damages or civil law (Neziqin): Baba Qamma, Baba Mesia, Baba Batra (civil law, covering damages and torts, then correct conduct of business, labor, and real estate transactions); Sanhedrin (institutions of government; criminal penalties); Makkot (flogging); Shabuot (oaths); Eduyyot (a collection arranged on other than topical lines); Horayot (rules governing improper conduct of civil authorities);

5. Holy Things (Qodoshim): Zebahim (every day animal offerings); Menahot (meal offerings); Hullin (animals slaughtered for secular purposes); Bekhorot (firstlings); Arakhin (vows of valuation); Temurah (vows of exchange of a beast for an already consecrated beast); Keritot (penalty of extirpation or premature death); Meilah (sacrilege); Tamid (the daily whole offering); Middot (the layout of the Temple building); Qinnim (how to deal with bird offerings designated for a given purpose and then mixed up);

6. *Purity* (Tohorot): Kelim (susceptibility of utensils to uncleanness); Ohalot (transmission of corpse-uncleanness in the tent of a corpse); Negaim (the uncleanness described at Lev. 13–14); Parah (the preparation of purification-water); Tohorot (problems of doubt in connection with matters of cleanness); Miqvaot (immersion-pools); Niddah (menstrual uncleanness); Makhsirin (rendering susceptible to uncleanness produce that is dry and so not susceptible); Zabim (the uncleanness covered at Lev. 15); Tebul-Yom (the uncleanness of one who has immersed on that self-same day and awaits sunset for completion of the purification rites); Yadayim (the uncleanness of hands); Uqsin (the uncleanness transmitted through what is connected to unclean produce).

In volume, the sixth division covers approximately a quarter of the entire document. Topics of interest to the priesthood and the Temple, such as priestly fees, conduct of the cult on holy days, conduct of the cult on ordinary days and management and upkeep of the Temple, and the rules of cultic cleanness, predominate in the first, second, fifth, and sixth divisions. Rules governing the social order form the bulk of the third and fourth. Of these tractates, only Eduyyot is organized along other than topical lines, rather collecting sayings on diverse subjects attributed to particular authorities. The Mishnah as printed today always includes Abot (sayings of the sages), but that document reached closure about a generation later than the Mishnah. While it serves as its initial apologetic, it does not conform to the formal, rhetorical, or logical traits characteristic of the Mishnah overall.

Main Points of Stress in the Mishnah

The stress of the Mishnah throughout on the priestly caste and the Temple cult point to the document's principal concern, which centered upon sanctification, understood as the correct arrangement of all things, each in its proper category, each called by its rightful name, just as at the creation as portrayed in the Priestly document, and just as with the cult itself as set forth in Leviticus. Further, the thousands of rules and cases (with sages' disputes thereon) that comprise the document upon close reading turn out to express in concrete language abstract principles of hierarchical classification. These define the document's method and mark it as a work of a philosophical character. Not only so, but a variety of specific, recurrent concerns, for example, the relationship of being to becoming, actual to potential, the principles of economics, the politics, correspond point by point to comparable ones in Graeco-Roman philosophy, particularly Aristotle's tradition. This stress on proper order and right rule and the formulation of a philosophy, politics, and economics, within the principles of natural history set forth by Aristotle, explain why the Mishnah makes a statement to be classified as philosophy, concerning the order of the natural world

in its correspondence with the supernatural world.

The Mishnah's Philosophy—Method and Propositions

The system of philosophy expressed through concrete and detailed law presented by the Mishnah, consists of a coherent logic and topic, a cogent world-view and comprehensive way of living. Its world-view speaks of transcendent things, a way of life in response to the supernatural meaning of what is done, a heightened and deepened perception of the sanctification of Israel in deed and in deliberation. Sanctification thus means two things, first, distinguishing Israel in all its dimensions from the world in all its ways; second, establishing the stability, order, regularity, predictability, and reliability of Israel in the world of nature and supernature in particular at moments and in contexts of danger. Danger means instability, disorder, irregularity, uncertainty, and betrayal. Each topic of the system as a whole takes up a critical and indispensable moment or context of social being. Through what is said in regard to each of the Mishnah's principal topics, what the system as a whole wishes to declare is fully expressed. Yet if the parts severally and jointly give the message of the whole, the whole cannot exist without all of the parts, so well joined and carefully crafted are they all. The details become clear in our survey of the document's topical program, in which we review the six divisions as they were finally spelled out.

The Division of Agriculture treats two topics, first, producing crops in accord with the scriptural rules on the subject, second, paying the required offerings and tithes to the priests, Levites, and poor. The principal point of the Division is that the Land is holy, because God has a claim both on it and upon what it produces. God's claim must be honored by setting aside a portion of the produce for those for whom God has designated it. God's ownership must be acknowledged by observing the rules God has laid down for use of the Land. In the temporal context in which the Mishnah was produced, some generations after the disastrous defeat by the Romans of Bar Kokhba and the permanent closure of Jerusalem to Jews' access, the stress of the division brought assurance that those aspects of the sanctification of Israel—land of Israel, Israel itself and its social order, the holy cycle of time—that survived still remained holy and subject to the rules of Heaven.

The Division of Appointed Times carries forward the same emphasis upon sanctification, now of the high points of the lunar-solar calendar of Israel. The second division forms a system in which the advent of a holy day, like the Sabbath of creation, sanctifies the life of the Israelite village through imposing on the village rules on the model of those of the Temple. The purpose of the system, therefore, is to bring into alignment the moment of sanctification of the village and the life of the home with the moment of sanctification of the Temple on those same occasions of appointed times. The underlying and generative logic of the system comes to expression in a concrete way here in the rule of like and opposite, comparison and contrast. What is not like something follows the rule opposite to that pertaining to that something. Here, therefore, since the village is the mirror image of the Temple, the upshot is dictated by the analogical-contrastive logic of the system as a whole. If things are done in one way in the Temple, they will be done in the opposite way in the village. Together the village and the Temple on the occasion of the holy day therefore form a single continuum, a completed creation, thus awaiting sanctification. The village is made like the Temple in that on appointed times one may not freely cross the lines distinguishing the village from the rest of the world, just as one may not freely cross the lines distinguishing the Temple from the world. But the village is a mirror image of the Temple. The boundary lines prevent free entry into the Temple, so they restrict free egress from the village. On the holy day what one may do in the Temple is precisely what one may not do in the village.

So the advent of the holy day affects the village by bringing it into sacred symmetry in such wise as to effect a system of opposites; each is holy, in a way precisely the

opposite of the other. Because of the underlying conception of perfection attained through the union of opposites, the village is not represented as conforming to the model of the cult, but of constituting its antithesis. The world thus regains perfection when on the holy day heaven and earth are united, the whole completed and done: the heaven, the earth, and all their hosts. This moment of perfection renders the events of ordinary time, of "history," essentially irrelevant. For what really matters in time is that moment in which sacred time intervenes and effects the perfection formed of the union of heaven and earth, of Temple, in the model of the former, and Israel, its complement. It is not a return to a perfect time but a recovery of perfect being, a fulfillment of creation, which explains the essentially ahistorical character of the Mishnah's Division on Appointed Times. Sanctification constitutes an ontological category and is effected by the creator.

This explains why the division in its rich detail is composed of two quite distinct sets of materials. First, it addresses what one does in the sacred space of the Temple on the occasion of sacred time, as distinct from what one does in that same sacred space on ordinary, undifferentiated days, which is a subject worked out in Holy Things. Second, the Division defines how for the occasion of the holy day one creates a corresponding space in one's own circumstance, and what one does, within that space, during sacred time. The division as a whole holds together through a shared, generative metaphor. It is the comparison, in the context of sacred time, of the spatial life of the Temple to the spatial life of the village, with activities and restrictions to be specified for each, upon the common occasion of the Sabbath or festival. The Mishnah's purpose therefore is to correlate the sanctity of the Temple, as defined by the holy day, with the restrictions of space and of action which make the life of the village different and holy, as defined by the holy day.

The Division of Women defines the women in the social economy of Israel's supernatural and natural reality. Women acquire definition wholly in relationship to men, who impart form to the Israelite social economy. The status of women is effected through both supernatural and natural, this-worldly action. Women formed a critical systemic component, because the proper regulation of women—subject to the father, then the husband—was deemed a central concern of Heaven, so that a betrothal would be subject to Heaven's supervision (Qiddushin, sanctification, being the pertinent tractate); documents, such as the marriage-contract or the writ of divorce, drawn up on earth, stand also for Heaven's concern with the sanctity of women in their marital relationship; so too, Heaven may through levirate marriage dictate whom a woman marries. What man and woman do on earth accordingly provokes a response in heaven, and the correspondences are perfect. So women are defined and secured both in heaven and here on earth, and that position is always and invariably relative to men.

The principal interest for the Mishnah is interstitial, just as, in general, sanctification comes into play at interstitial relationships, those that require decisive classification. Here it is the point at which a woman becomes, and ceases to be, holy to a particular man, that is, enters and leaves the marital union. These transfers of women are the dangerous and disorderly points in the relationship of woman to man, therefore, the Mishnah states, to society as well. The division's systemic statement stresses the preservation of order in transactions involving women and (other) property. Within this orderly world of documentary and procedural concerns a place is made for the disorderly conception of the marriage not formed by human volition but decreed in heaven, the levirate connection. Mishnah-tractate Yebamot states that supernature sanctifies a woman to a man (under the conditions of the levirate connection). What it says by indirection is that man sanctifies too: man, like God, can sanctify that relationship between a man and a woman, and can also effect the cessation of the sanctity of that same relationship.

Five of the seven tractates of the Division of Women are devoted to the formation and dissolution of the marital bond. Of them, three treat what is done by man here on earth, that is, formation of a marital

bond through betrothal and marriage contract and dissolution through divorce and its consequences. The Division and its system therefore delineate the natural and supernatural character of the woman's role in the social economy framed by man: the beginning, end, and middle of the relationship. The whole constitutes a significant part of the Mishnah's encompassing system of sanctification, for the reason that heaven confirms what men do on earth. A correctly prepared writ of divorce on earth changes the status of the woman to whom it is given, so that in heaven she is available for sanctification to some other man, while, without that same writ, in heaven's view, should she go to some other man, she would be liable to be put to death. The earthly deed and the heavenly perspective correlate. That is indeed very much part of larger system, which says the same thing over and over again.

The Division of Damages comprises two subsystems, which fit together in a logical way. One part presents rules for the normal conduct of civil society. These cover commerce, trade, real estate, and other matters of everyday intercourse, as well as mishaps, such as damages by chattels and persons, fraud, overcharge, interest, and the like, in that same context of everyday social life. The other part describes the institutions governing the normal conduct of civil society, that is, courts of administration, and the penalties at the disposal of the government for the enforcement of the law. The two subjects form a single tight and systematic dissertation on the nature of Israelite society and its economic, social, and political relationships, as the Mishnah envisages them. The main point of the first of the two parts of the Division is that the task of society is to maintain perfect stasis, to preserve the prevailing situation, and to secure the stability of all relationships. To this end, in the interchanges of buying and selling, giving and taking, borrowing and lending, it is important that there be an essential equality of interchange. No party in the end should have more than what he had at the outset, and none should be the victim of a sizable shift in fortune and circumstance. All parties' rights to, and in, this stable and unchanging economy of society are to be preserved. When the condition of a person is violated, so far as possible the law will secure the restoration of the antecedent status.

The goal of the system of civil law is the recovery of the prevailing order and balance, the preservation of the established wholeness of the social economy. This idea is powerfully expressed in the organization of the three tractates that comprise the civil law, which treat first abnormal and then normal transactions. The framers deal with damages done by chattels and by human beings, thefts and other sorts of malfeasance against the property of others. The civil law in both aspects pays closest attention to how the property and person of the injured party so far as possible are restored to their prior condition, that is, a state of normality. So attention to torts focuses upon penalties paid by the malefactor to the victim, rather than upon penalties inflicted by the court on the malefactor for what he has done. When speaking of damages, the Mishnah thus takes as its principal concern the restoration of the fortune of victims of assault or robbery. Then the framers take up the complementary and corresponding set of topics, the regulation of normal transactions. When we rapidly survey the kinds of transactions of special interest, we see from the topics selected for discussion what we have already uncovered in the deepest structure of organization and articulation of the basic theme.

The other half of this same unit of three tractates presents laws governing normal and routine transactions, many of them of the same sort as those dealt with in the first half. At issue are deposits of goods or possessions that one person leaves in safe-keeping with another. Called bailments, for example, cases of such transactions occur in both wings of the triple tractate, first, bailments subjected to misappropriation, or accusation thereof, by the bailiff, then, bailments transacted under normal circumstances. Under the rubric of routine transactions are those of workers and householders, that is, the purchase and sale of labor; rentals and bailments; real estate transactions; and inheritances and estates. Of the lot, the one involving real estate transactions is the most fully articulated and covers the widest range

of problems and topics. The three tractates of the civil law all together thus provide a complete account of the orderly governance of balanced transactions and unchanging civil relationships within Israelite society under ordinary conditions.

The character and interests of the Division of Damages present probative evidence of the larger program of the philosophers of the Mishnah. Their intention is to create nothing less than a full-scale Israelite government, subject to the administration of sages. This government is fully supplied with a constitution and bylaws. It makes provision for a court system and procedures, as well as a full set of laws governing civil society and criminal justice. This government, moreover, mediates between its own community and the outside ("pagan") world. Through its system of laws it expresses its judgment of the others and at the same time defines, protects, and defends its own society and social frontiers. It even makes provision for procedures of remission, to expiate its own errors. The (then non-existent) Israelite government imagined by the second-century philosophers centers upon the (then non-existent) Temple, and the (then forbidden) city, Jerusalem. For the Temple is one principal focus. There the highest court is in session; there the high priest reigns.

The penalties for law infringement are of three kinds, one of which involves sacrifice in the Temple. (The others are compensation, physical punishment, and death.) The basic conception of punishment, moreover, is that unintentional infringement of the rules of society, whether "religious" or otherwise, is not penalized but rather expiated through an offering in the Temple. If a member of the people of Israel intentionally infringes against the law, to be sure, that one must be removed from society and is put to death. And if there is a claim of one member of the people against another, that must be righted, so that the prior, prevailing status may be restored. So offerings in the Temple are given up to appease heaven and restore a whole bond between heaven and Israel, specifically on those occasions on which without malice or ill will an Israelite has disturbed the relationship. Israelite civil society without a Temple is not stable or normal, and not to be imagined. And the Mishnah is above all an act of imagination in defiance of reality.

The plan for the government involves a clear-cut philosophy of society, a philosophy that defines the purpose of the government and ensures that its task is not merely to perpetuate its own power. The Israelite government, within the Mishnaic fantasy, is supposed to preserve a perfect, steady-state society. That state of perfection which, within the same fantasy, the society to begin with everywhere attains and expresses forms the goal of the system throughout: no change anywhere from a perfect balance, proportion, and arrangement of the social order, its goods and services, responsibilities and benefits. This is in at least five aspects:

First of all, one of the ongoing principles of the law, expressed in one tractate after another, is that people are to follow and maintain the prevailing practice of their locale.

Second, the purpose of civil penalties is to restore the injured party to his prior condition, so far as this is possible, rather than merely to penalize the aggressor.

Third, there is the conception of true value, meaning that a given object has an intrinsic worth, which, in the course of a transaction, must be paid. In this way the seller does not leave the transaction any richer than when he entered it, or the buyer any poorer (parallel to penalties for damages).

Fourth, there can be no usury, a biblical prohibition adopted and vastly enriched in the Mishnaic thought, for money ("coins") is what it is. Any pretense that it has become more than what it was violates, in its way, the conception of true value.

Fifth, when real estate is divided, it must be done with full attention to the rights of all concerned, so that, once more, one party does not gain at the expense of the other.

In these and many other aspects the law expresses its obsession with the perfect stasis of Israelite society. Its paramount purpose is in preserving and ensuring that that perfection of the division of this world is kept inviolate or restored to its true status when violated.

The Division of Holy Things presents

a system of sacrifice and sanctuary. The division centers upon the everyday rules always applicable to the cult: the daily whole offering, the sin offering and guilt-offering which one may bring any time under ordinary circumstances; the right sequence of diverse offerings; the way in which the rites of the whole-, sin-, and guilt-offerings are carried out; what sorts of animals are acceptable; the accompanying cereal offerings; the support and provision of animals for the cult and of meat for the priesthood; the support and material maintenance of the cult and its building. We have a system before us: the system of the cult of the Jerusalem Temple seen as an ordinary and everyday affair, a continuing and routine operation. That is why special rules for the cult, both in respect to the altar and in regard to the maintenance of the buildings, personnel, and even the whole city, will be elsewhere—in Appointed Times and Agriculture. But from the perspective of Holy Things, those divisions intersect by supplying special rules and raising extraordinary (Agriculture: land-bound; Appointed Times: time-bound) considerations for that theme which Holy Things claims to set forth in its most general and unexceptional way: the cult as something permanent and everyday.

The Division of Purities presents a very simple system of three principal parts: sources of uncleanness, objects and substances susceptible to uncleanness, and modes of purification from uncleanness. So it tells the story of what makes a given sort of object unclean and what makes it clean. Viewed as a whole, the Division of Purities treats the interplay of persons, food, and liquids. Dry inanimate objects or food are not susceptible to uncleanness. What is wet is susceptible. So liquids activate the system. What is unclean, moreover, emerges from uncleanness through the operation of liquids, specifically, through immersion in fit water of requisite volume and in natural condition. Liquids thus deactivate the system. Thus, water in its natural condition is what concludes the process by removing uncleanness. Water in its unnatural condition, that is, deliberately affected by human agency, is what imparts susceptibility to uncleanness to begin with. The uncleanness of persons, furthermore, is signified by body liquids or flux in the case of the menstruating woman and the *zab* (the person suffering from the form of uncleanness described at Lev. 15:1ff.). Corpse uncleanness is conceived to be a kind of effluent, a viscous gas, which flows like liquid. Utensils for their part receive uncleanness when they form receptacles able to contain liquid.

In sum, we have a system in which the invisible flow of fluid-like substances or powers serve to put food, drink, and receptacles into the status of uncleanness and to remove those things from that status. Whether or not we call the system "metaphysical," it certainly has no material base but is conditioned upon highly abstract notions. Thus in material terms, the effect of liquid is upon food, drink, utensils, and man. The consequence has to do with who may eat and drink what food and liquid, and what food and drink may be consumed in which pots and pans. These loci are specified by tractates on utensils and on food and drink.

The human being is ambivalent. Persons fall in the middle, between sources and loci of uncleanness, because they are both. They serve as sources of uncleanness. They also become unclean. The *zab*, suffering the uncleanness described in Leviticus Chapter 15, the menstruating woman, the woman after childbirth, and the person afflicted with the skin ailment described in Leviticus Chapters 13 and 14—all are sources of uncleanness. But being unclean, they fall within the system's loci, its program of consequences. So they make other things unclean and are subject to penalties because they are unclean. Unambiguous sources of uncleanness never also constitute loci affected by uncleanness. They always are unclean and never can become clean: the corpse, the dead creeping thing, and things like them. Inanimate sources of uncleanness and inanimate objects convey uncleanness *ex opere operato*; their status of being unclean never changes; they present no ambiguity. Systemically unique, man and liquids have the capacity to inaugurate the processes of uncleanness (as sources) and also are subject to those same processes (as objects of uncleanness).

Having reviewed the system of the Mish-

nah and its points of stress, we hear a single message. It is a message of a system that answered a single encompassing question, and the question formed a stunning counterpart to that of the sixth century B.C.E. The Pentateuchal system addressed one reading of the events of the sixth century, highlighted by the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple in 586 B.C.E. At stake was how Israel as defined by that system related to its land, represented by its Temple, and the message may be simply stated: what appears to be the given is in fact a gift, subject to stipulations. The precipitating event for the Mishnaic system was the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple in 70 C.E., the question turned obsession with the defeat of Bar Kokhba and the closure of Jerusalem to Jews. The urgent issue taken up by the Mishnah was, specifically, what, in the aftermath of the destruction of the holy place and holy cult, remained of the sanctity of the holy caste, the priesthood, the holy land, and, above all, the holy people and its holy way of life? The answer was that sanctity persists, indelibly, in Israel, the people, in its way of life, in its land, in its priesthood, in its food, in its mode of sustaining life, in its manner of procreating and so sustaining the nation.

The Mishnah's system therefore focused upon the holiness of the life of Israel, the people, a holiness that had formerly centered on the Temple. The logically consequent question was, what is the meaning of sanctity, and how shall Israel attain, or give evidence of, sanctification. The answer to the question derived from the original creation, the end of the Temple directing attention to the beginning of the natural world that the Temple had embodied. For the meaning of sanctity the framers therefore turned to that first act of sanctification, the one in creation. It came about when, all things in array, in place, each with its proper names, God blessed and sanctified the seventh day on the eve of the first Sabbath. Creation was made ready for the blessing and the sanctification when all things were very good, that is to say, in their rightful order, called by their rightful name. An orderly nature was a sanctified and blessed nature, so dictated Scripture in the name of the Supernatural. So to receive the blessing and to be made holy, all things in nature and society were to be set in right array. Given the condition of Israel, the people, in its land, in the aftermath of the catastrophic war against Rome led by Bar Kokhba in 132–135 C.E., putting things in order was no easy task. But that is why, after all, the question pressed, the answer proving inexorable and obvious. The condition of society corresponded to the critical question that obsessed the system-builders.

The Critical Place of the Mishnah in Rabbinic Literature

When, in ca. 200, the Mishnah reached closure and was received and adopted as law by the state-sanctioned Jewish governments in both the Roman empire, in the land of Israel, and Iran, in Babylonia, respectively, the function and character of the document precipitated a considerable crisis. Politically and theologically presented as the foundation for the everyday administration of the affairs of Jewry, the Mishnah ignored the politics of the sponsoring regimes. Essentially ahistorical, the code hardly identified as authoritative any known political institution, let alone the patriarchate in the land of Israel, the exilarchate in Babylonia.

True, that political-institutional flaw (from the viewpoint of the sponsoring authorities) scarcely can have proved critical. But silence of the authorship of the Mishnah on the theological call for their document presented not a chronic but an acute problem. Since Jews generally accepted the authority of Moses at Sinai, failure to claim for the document a clear and explicit relationship to the Torah of Moses defined that acute issue. Why should people accept as authoritative the rulings of this piece of writing? Omitting reference to a theological, as much as to a political myth, the authorship of the Mishnah also failed to signal the relationship between their document and Scripture. Since, for all Judaisms, Hebrew Scriptures in general, and the Pentateuch, in particular, represented God's will for Israel, silence on that matter provoked considerable response. Let me now spell out in some detail the political,

theological, and literary difficulties presented by the Mishnah to any theory that the Mishnah formed part of God's revelation to Moses at Sinai.

Laws issued to define what people were supposed to do could not stand by themselves; they had to receive the imprimatur of Heaven, that is, they had to be given the status of revelation. Accordingly, to make its way in Israelite life, the Mishnah as a constitution and code demanded for itself a theory of beginnings at (or in relation to) Sinai, with Moses, from God. The character of the Mishnah itself hardly won confidence that, on the face of it, the document formed part of, or derived from Sinai. It was originally published through oral formulation and oral transmission, that is, in the medium of memorization. But it had been in the medium of writing that, in the view of all of Israel until about 200 C.E., God had been understood to reveal the divine word and will. The Torah was a written book. People who claimed to receive further messages from God usually wrote them down. They had three choices in securing acceptance of their account. All three involved linking the new to the old.

In claiming to hand on revelation, they could, first, sign their books with the names of biblical heroes. Second, they could imitate the style of biblical Hebrew. Third, they could present an exegesis of existing written verses, validating their ideas by supplying proof texts for them. From the closure of the Torah literature in the time of Ezra, circa 450 B.C.E. to the time of the Mishnah, nearly seven hundred years later, we do not have a single book alleged to be holy and at the same time standing wholly out of relationship to the Holy Scriptures of ancient Israel. The Pseudepigraphic writings fall into the first category, the Essene writings at Qumran into the second and third. We may point also to the Gospels, which take as a principal problem demonstrating how Jesus had fulfilled the prophetic promises of the Old Testament and in other ways carried forward and even embodied Israel's Scripture.

Insofar as a piece of Jewish writing did not find a place in relationship to Scripture, its author laid no claim to present a holy book. The contrast between Jubilees and the Testaments of the Patriarchs, with their constant and close harping on biblical matters, and the several books of Maccabees, shows the differences. The former claim to present God's revealed truth, the latter, history. So a book was holy because in style, in authorship, or in (alleged) origin it continued Scripture, finding a place therefore (at least in the author's mind) within the canon, or because it provided an exposition on Scripture's meaning. But the Mishnah made no such claim. It entirely ignored the style of biblical Hebrew, speaking in a quite different kind of Hebrew altogether. It is silent on its authorship through sixty-two of the sixty-three tractates (the claims of Abot are post facto).

In any event, nowhere does the Mishnah contain the claim that God had inspired the authors of the document. These are not given biblical names and certainly are not alleged to have been biblical saints. Most of the book's named authorities flourished within the same century as its anonymous arrangers and redactors, not in remote antiquity. Above all, the Mishnah contains scarcely a handful of exegeses of Scripture. These, where they occur, play a trivial and tangential role. So here is the problem of the Mishnah: different from Scripture in language and style, indifferent to the claim of authorship by a biblical hero or divine inspiration, stunningly aloof from allusion to verses of Scripture for nearly the whole of its discourse—yet authoritative for Israel.

The Mishnah was not a statement of theory alone, telling only how matters will be in the eschaton. Nor was it a wholly sectarian document, reporting the view of a group without standing or influence in the larger life of Israel. True, in some measure it bears both of these traits of eschatology and sectarian provenance. But the Mishnah was (and is) law for Israel. It entered the government and courts of the Jewish people, both in the motherland and also overseas, as the authoritative constitution of the courts of Judaism. The advent of the Mishnah therefore marked a turning in the life of the nation-religion. The document demanded explanation and apology. And the one choice one did not face, as a Jew in

third-century Tiberias, Sepphoris, Caesarea, or Beth Shearim, in Galilee, was ignore the Mishnah and the issues inherent in its character as a piece of writing given political standing by the ethnarch.

True, one might refer solely to ancient Scripture and tradition and live life out within the inherited patterns of the familiar Israelite religion-culture. But as soon as one dealt with the Jewish government in charge of everyday life—went to court over the damages done to a crop by a neighbor's ox, for instance—one came up against a law in addition to the law of Scripture, a document the principles of which governed and settled all matters. So the Mishnah rapidly came to confront the life of Israel. The people who knew the Mishnah, the rabbis or sages, came to dominate that life. And their claim, in accord with the Mishnah, to exercise authority and the right to impose heavenly sanction came to perplex. There were two solutions to the problem set forth by the character of the Mishnah.

[1] *The Mishnah as an Autonomous, Free-standing Component of the Torah of Sinai*: One response was represented by the claim that the authorities of the Mishnah stood in a chain of tradition that extended back to Sinai; stated explicitly in the Mishnah's first apologetic, tractate Abot, that circulated from approximately a generation beyond the promulgation of the Mishnah itself, that view required amplification and concrete demonstration. This approach treated the word *torah* as a common noun, as the word that spoke of a status or classification of sayings. A saying was *torah*, that is, enjoyed the status of torah or fell into the classification of *torah*, if it stood in the line of tradition from Sinai.

[2] The Mishnah is subordinate to the written part of the Torah but can be shown to stand on the Written Torah's authority: A second took the same view of *torah* as a common noun. This response was to treat the Mishnah as subordinate to, and dependent upon, Scripture. Then *torah* was what fell into the classification of the revelation of *Torah* by God to Moses at Sinai. The way of providing what was needed within that theory was to link statements of the Mishnah to statements ("proof texts") of Scripture. The Tosefta, ca. 300, a compilation of citations of, and comments upon the Mishnah, together with some autonomous materials that may have reached closure in the period in which the work of redaction of the Mishnah was going on, as well as the Talmud of the Land of Israel, ca. 400, fairly systematically did just that.

The former solution treated Torah with a small t, that is to say, as a generic classification, and identified the Mishnah with the Torah revealed to Moses at Sinai by claiming a place for the Mishnah's authorities in the process of tradition and transmission that brought torah—no longer, the Torah, the specific writing comprising the Five Books of Moses—to contemporary Israel, the Jewish people. It was a theological solution, expressed through ideas, attitudes, implicit claims, but not through sustained rewriting of either Scripture or the Mishnah.

The latter solution, by contrast, concerned the specific and concrete statements of the Mishnah and required a literary, not merely a theological, statement, one precise and specific to passages of the Mishnah, one after the other. What was demanded by the claim that the Mishnah depended upon, but therefore enjoyed the standing of, Scripture, was a line-by-line commentary upon the Mishnah in light of Scripture. But this too treated *torah* as a common noun.

[3] The Redefinition of the Torah: The third way emerged in Sifra, a sustained and profound philosophical reading of the book of Leviticus. Sifra's solution would set aside the two solutions, the theological and the literary, and explore the much more profound issues of the fundamental and generative structure of right thought, yielding, as a matter of fact, both Scripture and the Mishnah. This approach insisted that *torah* always was a proper noun. There was, and is, only The Torah. But this—The Torah—demanded expansion and vast amplification. When we know the principles of logical structure and especially those of hierarchical classification that animate The Torah, we can undertake part of the task of expansion and amplification, that is, join in the processes of thought that, in the mind of God, yielded The Torah. For when we know how God thought in giving The Torah

to Moses at Sinai and so accounting for the classifications and their ordering in the very creation of the world, we can ourselves enter into The Torah and participate in its processes.

Presenting the two Torahs in a single statement constituted an experiment in logic, that logic, in particular, that made cogent thought possible, and that transformed facts into propositions, and propositions into judgments of the more, or the less, consequential. While the Mishnah's other apologists wrote the written Torah into the Mishnah, Sifra's authorship wrote the oral Torah into Scripture. That is to say, the other of the two approaches to the problem of the Mishnah, the one of Sifra, to begin with claimed to demonstrate that the Mishnah found its correct place within the written Torah itself. Instead of citing verses of Scripture in the context of the Mishnah, the authorship of Sifra cited passages of the Mishnah in the context of Scripture, Leviticus in particular.

What the three accounts of the Mishnah's relationship to the Torah achieved, each in its own way, cohered to yield a single consequence. All three insisted on a privileged position for the Mishnah within, or at least in intimate relationship to, the Torah of Sinai. That explains two facts that together demonstrate the absolute uniqueness of the Mishnah in Rabbinic literature. First, the Mishnah as a document acknowledged no prior writing, except—and then only episodically—for Scripture itself. Second, the Mishnah alone among Rabbinic documents itself received sustained and systematic commentaries in the model of those accorded to Scripture. Every document that followed the Mishnah, that is to say, the entirety of Rabbinic literature except for the Mishnah, took shape as a commentary to a prior document, either Scripture or the Mishnah itself. So the entirety of Rabbinic literature testifies to the unique standing of the Mishnah, acknowledging its special status, without parallel or peer, as the oral part of the Torah.

The Tosefta

A huge supplement to the Mishnah, four times larger than the document it amplifies, the Tosefta, ca. 300, exhibits none of the documentary traits that mark as autonomous the other Rabbinic writings. Wholly depending upon the Mishnah for its rhetoric, topical program, and logic of coherent discourse, the Tosefta is like a vine on a trellis. It has no structure of its own but most commonly cites and glosses a passage of the Mishnah, not differentiating its forms and wording of sentences from those of the cited passage. Only seldom—for somewhat under a sixth of the whole of its volume—does the Tosefta present a statement that may be interpreted entirely independent of the Mishnah's counterpart (if any). The Tosefta covers nearly the whole of the Mishnah's program but has none of its own.

What marks the document as dependent, further, is that its sentences by themselves do not hold together at all. Their order consistently refers to that of the Mishnah's statements. The logic of coherent discourse, affecting more than two or three sentences at a time, is wholly fixed-associative. The dependent status of the Tosefta derives from the simple fact that, for most of the document we simply cannot understand a line without first consulting the Mishnah's counterpart statement. Once a text derives from some other document not only its coherence, but even the first level of meaning of its sentences one by one, we no longer can maintain that we have a freestanding statement, let alone a systemic one. The document contains three kinds of writings:

[1] The first consists of verbatim citations and glosses of sentences of the Mishnah.
[2] The second is made up of freestanding statements that complement the sense of the Mishnah but do not cite a Mishnah-paragraph verbatim. These statements can be fully understood only in dialogue with the Mishnah's counterpart.
[3] The third comprises freestanding, autonomous statements, formulated in the manner of the Mishnah but fully comprehensible on their own.

The editors or compilers of the Tosefta arranged their materials in accord with two principles, and these govern the order of the Tosefta's statements in correspondence to the Mishnah's. First will come statements that cite what the Mishnah's sentences say,

and this ordinarily will occur in the order of the Mishnah's statements. Second, in general Mishnah-citation and gloss will be succeeded by Mishnah-amplification, which is to say, sentences that do not cite the Mishnah's corresponding ones, but that cannot be understood without reference to the Mishnah's rule or sense. The first two kinds of statements are the ones that cannot be fully understood without knowledge of the Mishnah, which defines their context. Third in sequence, commonly, will be the small number of free-standing statements, which can be wholly understood on their own and without appeal to the sense or principle of the corresponding Mishnah-passage; and in some few cases, these compositions and even composites will have no parallel in the Mishnah at all.

Autonomous statements require attention in their own right. These comprise paragraphs that make their own point and can be fully understood in their own terms. These freestanding materials are of two kinds. First, some autonomous materials work on topics important to a passage in the Mishnah and are placed by Tosefta's framers in a position corresponding to the thematic parallel in the Mishnah. What marks these materials as autonomous is that, while they intersect with the Mishnah's topic, their interest in that topic bears no point in common with the Mishnah's treatment of the same topic. A second criterion, which is complementary, is that we can understand what follows without referring to the Mishnah for any purpose. The second type of autonomous materials addresses topics omitted in the Mishnah, and that type is included only because, in the Mishnah, there may be a tangential reference to the topic treated by Tosefta's composition. The criterion of classification, then, is even simpler than that governing the first type. The Tosefta's authorship has collected this kind of material we know not where. It can have been composed in the same period as the writing of the Mishnah.

While these freestanding statements that can as well have stood in the Mishnah as in the Tosefta itself may have reached final formulation prior to the closure of the Mishnah, most of the document either cites the Mishnah verbatim and comments upon it, or can be understood only in light of the Mishnah even though the Mishnah is not cited verbatim, and that is sound reason for assigning the formulation of most of the document and the compilation of the whole to the time after the Mishnah was concluded. The first two types of materials certainly were written after the closure of the Mishnah. The Tosefta as a whole, covering all three types, was compiled sometime after the conclusion of the Mishnah in ca. 200 but before the formation of the Talmud of the Land of Israel, ca. 400, which frequently cites materials found in the Tosefta and interprets the Mishnah in light of the Tosefta's complements. The compilation therefore is a work of the third century, 200–300.

But in substance the document's claim proves still stronger. The Tosefta's materials, coherent and cogent not among themselves but only in relationship to the Mishnah, serve as the Mishnah's first commentary, first amplification, and first extension. If by "a talmud," we mean, a sustained, systematic commentary to the Mishnah, following a program of exegesis and analysis, then the Tosefta must be called the first talmud, prior to the ones done in the Land of Israel by ca. 400 or completed in Babylonia by ca. 600. Since both Talmuds read Mishnah-passages through Tosefta-complements to the Mishnah, the Tosefta forms the bridge between the Talmuds and much of the Mishnah.

But that does not mean the Tosefta is a very accessible document. The opposite is the case. And the reason derives from the Tosefta's very character as a document of mediation, expansion, and extension of another piece of writing. The Tosefta as is now clear makes sense only in relationship to the Mishnah. That is so not only for its program and order, which are defined by the Mishnah, but also for its individual compositions. Each completed unit of thought of the Tosefta is to be understood, to begin with, in relationship with the Mishnah: is it a citation of and commentary to the Mishnah-passage that forms its counterpart? Is the passage fullyto be comprehended on its own or only in relationship to a counterpart passage of the Mishnah? Or is the

passage freestanding? The answers to these three questions define the first step in making any sense at all of a passage of the Tosefta.

The Tosefta, as is already clear, stands nearly entirely within the circle of the Mishnah's interests, only rarely asking questions about topics omitted altogether by the Mishnah's authors, always following the topical decisions on what to discuss as laid down by the founders of the whole. One cannot write about the Tosefta's theology or law, as though these constituted a system susceptible of description and interpretation independent of the Mishnah's system. At the same time, the exegetes of the Mishnah, in the Tosefta, and in the two Talmuds, stand apart from, and later than, the authors of the Mishnah itself. Accordingly, the exegetes systematically say whatever they wish to say by attaching their ideas to a document earlier than their own, and by making the principal document say what they wish to contribute.

The system of expressing ideas through reframing those of predecessors preserves the continuity of tradition and establishes a deep stability and order upon the culture framed by that tradition. The Tosefta not only depends for structure, order, and sense, upon the Mishnah, but, in general, the materials assembled in the Tosefta set forth no viewpoint other than that of the Mishnah's counterpart materials, clarified, refined, and improved. No study has as yet shown a sustained tendency in the Tosefta to execute a distinct exegesis of the Mishnah in such wise as to recast the sense or character of the Mishnah's program, though in numerous passages, the work of commentary shades over into a fresh reading of a specific problem.

The Talmuds

We come now to the two Talmuds, the Talmud of the Land of Israel, ca. 400 C.E., and the Talmud of Babylonia, ca. 600 C.E. Since the second of the two forms the definitive statement of the Judaism of the dual Torah and defines the curriculum of Torah-study in the very centers in which the Torah is studied as God's word and will for Israel, we do well to begin by considering the purpose that these documents were meant to serve. In a word, the Talmuds propose to state in writing the basic rules of the social order, and to show us how to discover the right rule, based on the principles God has made known in the Torah, for the affairs of everyday life. The Talmuds are documents full of debates on erudite and esoteric questions. But in the debates about fine points of law, ritual, and theology, "our sages of blessed memory" formulated through concrete examples the rules of right thinking and accurate formulation in words of God's will for the here and now. For they held that the Torah is given to purify the hearts of humanity, and that what God really wants is the heart. But there, in the center of life, in the streets and homes of the holy community, Israel, what does that mean? It is through close and careful thinking about little things that "our sages" brought the Torah's great principles into the everyday world of ordinary people. The media of language, logic, and law express the message of the Torah of Sinai. The Talmuds show us how, for the purposes of portraying the entirety of the social order, its culture and its politics alike, people write in signals an account of their modes of thought and how these are to be replicated any time and anywhere.

First, to define matters: a talmud—generically defined—is a sustained, systematic amplification and analysis of passages of the Mishnah and other teachings alongside the Mishnah, inclusive of the Tosefta, that are accorded the status of Tannaite authority. Of the genus, talmud, there are two species, the Tosefta, on the one side, the two Talmuds, on the other. These further subspeciate into the Talmud of the Land of Israel (Yerushalmi), ca. 400, and the Talmud of Babylonia (Bavli), ca. 600. The former treats the first four divisions of the Mishnah; the latter, the second through the fifth; each is independent of the other, the two meeting only at parts of the Mishnah and sharing, further, some sayings attributed to authorities after the Mishnah; but these the documents' respective authorships read each in its own way.

The genus, talmud, as a source of information in clarification of the Mishnah was established by the Tosefta; but there information was left inert, the Tosefta's framers' knowing nothing of dialectics (other than what they found on rare occasion in the Mishnah itself). What characterizes the other species of talmud, the one that encompasses the two Talmuds, is the transformation of information into principle, the systematic formation of argument, the transformation of facts, the raw materials of analytical inquiry, through the modes of thought of applied reason and practical logic, into systemic truth.

The subspecies of the species formed of the two Talmuds must be differentiated. What the first Talmud contributed was the definition of a talmud in which received facts ("traditions") were treated as active and consequential, requiring analysis and deep thought. The second Talmud transformed thought into argument, subordinating fact to the fully-realized processes of dialectical argument and reasoning. So the three talmuds, the Tosefta, the Talmud of the Land of Israel, and the Talmud of Babylonia, in sequence expanded the definition of the genus, talmud, each adding an important component of that definition.

Both Talmuds-strictly-speaking—the Yerushalmi, the Bavli—are formed into commentaries to some of the same passages of the Mishnah (tractates in the divisions of Appointed Times, Women, and Damages, but not in Agriculture or Holy Things; neither Talmud takes up Purities, except for tractate Niddah). Both are laid out in the same way, that is, as ad hoc treatments of phrases or even whole paragraphs of the Mishnah; the two Talmuds are identical in form, species of a genus. The two Talmuds defined Mishnah-commentary in a distinctive way, through their active program of supplying not merely information but guidance on its meaning: a program of inquiry, a set of consequential issues, in place of mere information. That program would be fully realized only in the second, and last, of the two Talmuds.

But both Talmuds in common exhibit definitive traits as well. Specifically they share the program of harmonizing one rule or principle with another. Both, furthermore, propose to uncover the scriptural foundation of the Mishnah's rules. In common therefore they undertake the sustained demonstration of the theology of the Torah: its perfection, on the one side, its unity (oral and written), on the other. Because of that fact, we may properly speak of "the Talmuds," since both do one thing, though the second does another in addition.

To begin with, the two Talmuds look alike. That is because both comment on the same prior text, the Mishnah. Both take up a few sentences of that prior text and paraphrase and analyze them. Both ask the same questions, e.g., clarifying the language of the Mishnah, identifying the scriptural foundations of the Mishnah's rules, comparing the Mishnah's rules with those of the Tosefta or other texts of Tannaite status, that is, presented with attributions of sayings solely to names that occur also in the Mishnah or Tosefta. They furthermore are comparable because they organize their materials in the same way. They moreover take up pretty much the same topical agenda, in common selecting some divisions of the Mishnah and ignoring others, agreeing in particular to treat the matters of everyday practice, as distinct from theory, covered by Mishnah's divisions of Appointed Times, Women, and Damages. Both documents moreover are made up of already-available compositions and composites, which we may identify, in each document, by reference to the same literary traits or indications of completion prior to inclusion in the Talmuds. So they exhibit traits of shared literary policy.

In both, moreover, we find not only the same received document, the Mishnah, but occasionally also citations of, and allusions to, the same supplementary collection to the Mishnah, the Tosefta, and also a further kind of saying, one bearing the marks of formalization and memorization that serve to classify it as authoritative ("Tannaite") but external to the composition of the Mishnah and the compilation of the Tosefta. The points of coincidence are more than formal, therefore, since both Talmuds cite the same Mishnah-tractates, at some points the same Tosefta-passages, and also, from

time to time, the same external Tannaite formulations.

Not only are the two Talmuds alike, but in their canonical context, the two Talmuds also are different from all other documents of the Judaism of the dual Torah in the formative age. First of all, among Mishnah-centered writings in the canon—the Tosefta, Sifra, the two Sifres, the Bavli and the Yerushalmi—only the two Talmuds conduct sustained analytical inquiries over a broad range of problems. The Tosefta is not an analytical document; we have to supply the missing analytical program (as the authors of the two Talmuds, but particularly the Bavli, themselves discovered early on). Sifra treats the Mishnah in only a single aspect, while the two Talmuds cover that aspect generously, along with a far more elaborate program. They pursue no encompassing exegetical program. So the two Talmuds are unique in context.

While set forth in a manner that implicitly bears the attributes of a commentary, that is a mere amplification of received truth, as a commentary to the Mishnah, the two Talmuds express, in a cogent and coherent way, the topical, rhetorical, and logical choices, forming the well-crafted statement and viewpoint, of their respective authorships. The two Talmuds therefore comprise a genus, talmud, made up of two species, the Talmud of the Land of Israel and the Talmud of Babylonia. But what speciates vastly overrides what unites the species into a genus; the form is common, and, we shall see, so is much of the thought. Where the Talmuds differ is in the deepest layers of discourse but not on the surface of the medium or in the messages they set forth.

Both Talmuds invariably do to the Mishnah one of these four things, and each of these procedures will ordinarily be expressed in patterned language. It suffices here to classify the types of patterns:

[1] text criticism;
[2] exegesis of the meaning of the Mishnah, including glosses and amplifications;
[3] addition of Scriptural prooftexts of the Mishnah's central propositions; and
[4] harmonization of one Mishnah passage with another such passage or with a statement of Tosefta.

Each of these types of compositions follows a well-defined form, so that, if we were given only an account in abstract terms of the arrangement of subject and predicate or a simple account of the selection of citation language (e.g., "as it is said," "our rabbis have taught") we could readily predict the purpose of the composition or composite. So formal traits accompany the purpose of the commentary-compositions and other compositions and composites and permit differentiation of one type from another.

The first two of these four procedures remain wholly within the narrow frame of the Mishnah passage subject to discussion. Therefore, in the natural order of things, what the two Talmuds will find interesting in a given Mishnah-passage will respond to the same facts and commonly will do so in much the same way. The second pair take an essentially independent stance *vis-a-vis* the Mishnah pericope at hand. Part of the rhetorical convention of the Talmuds governs the order in which types of compositions—Mishnah-text-criticism, exegesis, Scriptural prooftexts, and the like—are set forth. Ordinarily, the order for both Talmuds is the same as given above. While both Talmuds conform to complex and distinctive rhetorical programs, what makes them different from all other documents of Rabbinic literature is not only rhetoric but logic, to which we turn forthwith.

The Composition of the Two Talmuds

The two Talmuds are made up of compositions, complete in themselves, which have been formed into composites. The framers of the Talmuds then resort to two distinct logics of coherent discourse to form of their materials whole and cogent documents. Philosophical logic ordinarily holds together into cogent paragraphs the discrete sentences of a given composition. The logic of fixed association then connects into protracted statements of a cogent character otherwise unrelated sequential sentences. It also joins into sizable compositions entire paragraphs that, on their own, through their own propositions, in no way coalesce. The

authorship of the Talmuds in the making of medium- and large-scale logical connections thus resorted to two distinct principles of cogent discourse: the one of propositional connection within completed units of thought, a connection discovered through the pursuit of reasoned speculative inquiry, and the second of the fixed associative connection between and among those same completed units of thought, producing large-scale compositions.

Sizable numbers of the completed units of thought of the Talmuds find inner cogency through the development of a proposition concerning a given theme. Overall, these units of completed thought are linked to one another through the connections supplied for the Talmuds extrinsically by both the Mishnah and Scripture. The framers of the Talmuds had in hand a tripartite corpus of inherited materials awaiting composition into a final, closed document. First, they took up materials, in various states and stages of completion, pertinent to the Mishnah or to the principles of laws that the Mishnah had originally brought to articulation. Second, they had in hand received materials, again in various conditions, pertinent to Scripture, both as Scripture related to the Mishnah and also as Scripture laid forth its own narratives. And that fact points to the way in which the logic of fixed association governed their work.

Little of what the Talmuds' authorships present in a propositional form derives cogency and force from a received statement. True, many of the propositions of the two Talmuds, in the nature of things, address the meaning of paragraphs of the Mishnah, and most of the documents are laid out as a commentary to either the Mishnah or Scripture. But the authorship of each of the compositions and the framer of the respective composites has selected out of Scripture and the Mishnah the passages or topics it wishes to amplify. At stake is the reformation of the (oral part of the) Torah in a way not envisaged by its writers. The Talmuds do not merely clarify the Mishnah; both of them in point of fact re-present the Torah—a very different thing.

The writers of the Mishnah created a coherent document, with a topical program formed in accord with the logical order dictated by the characteristics of a given topic, and with a set of highly distinctive formulary and formal traits as well. But these are obscured when the document is taken apart into bits and pieces and reconstituted in the way in which the Talmuds do. The redefinition of the Torah accomplished by the Talmuds therefore represented a vast revision of the initial writing down of the oral component of the Torah—a point at which the hermeneutics shaded over into a profoundly theological activity.

What Happens to the Mishnah in the Talmuds

For the Mishnah is read by the Talmuds as a composite of discrete and essentially autonomous rules, a set of atoms, not an integrated molecule, so to speak. In this reading, the most striking formal traits of the Mishnah are obliterated. More important, the Mishnah as a whole and complete statement of a viewpoint no longer exists. Its propositions are reduced to details. But what is offered instead? The answer is, a statement that, on occasion, recasts details in generalizations encompassing a wide variety of other details across the gaps between one tractate and another. This immensely creative and imaginative approach to the Mishnah vastly expands the range of discourse. But the consequence is to deny to the Mishnah both its own mode of speech and its distinctive and coherent message. So the two Talmuds formulate their own hermeneutics, to convey their theological system:

[1] defining the Torah and
[2] demonstrating its perfection and comprehensive character: unity, harmony, lineal origin from Sinai.

What the second Talmud would later on add to that first stage in theological re-presentation of the Torah is instantiation of modes of analysis of the unity, lineal formation, and harmony of the Torah. But the framers of the first Talmud assuredly affirmed the same points.

Both authorships take an independent

stance when facing the Mishnah, making choices, reaching decisions of their own. Both Talmuds' framers deal with Mishnah-tractates of their own choice, and neither provides a Talmud to the entirety of the Mishnah. What the Mishnah therefore contributed to the Talmuds was not received in a spirit of humble acceptance by the sages who produced either of the two Talmuds. Important choices were made about what to treat, hence what to ignore. The exegetical mode of reception did not have to obscure the main lines of the Mishnah's system. But it surely did so. The discrete reading of sentences, or, at most, paragraphs, denying all context, avoiding all larger generalizations except for those transcending the specific lines of tractates—this approach need not have involved the utter reversal of the paramount and definitive elements of the Mishnah's whole and integrated world view (its "Judaism"). But doing these things did facilitate the revision of the whole into a quite different pattern. That represents a re-presentation of the Torah, one of considerable originality indeed.

A second trait, already familiar to us, joins with the foregoing. The Mishnah rarely finds it necessary to adduce prooftexts from the written Torah in support of its statements. The Talmuds, by contrast, find it appropriate whenever possible to cite Scriptural prooftexts for the propositions of the Mishnah. While the various tractates of the Mishnah relate in different ways to Scripture, the view of the framers of the Talmud on the same matter is not differentiated. So far as they are concerned, prooftexts for Mishnaic rules are required. These will be supplied in substantial numbers. And that is the main point. The Mishnah now is systematically represented as not standing free and separate from Scripture, but dependent upon it. The authority of the Mishnah's laws then is reinforced. But the autonomy of the Mishnah as a whole is severely compromised. Just as the Mishnah is represented in the Talmud as a set of rules, rather than as a philosophical essay, so it is presented, rule by rule, as a secondary and derivative development of Scripture. It would be difficult to imagine a more decisive effort to re-formulate the Torah than is accomplished by this work.

The undifferentiated effort to associate diverse Mishnah laws with Scripture is to be viewed together with the systematic breakup of the Mishnah into its diverse laws. The two quite separate activities produce a single effect in both Talmuds. They permit the Talmuds to represent the state of affairs pretty much as the framers of the Talmuds wish to do. Theology as a creative venture here determines to (re)define the Torah. And how is this done? Everything is shown to be continuous: Scripture, Mishnah, the Tosefta where cited, the authoritative sayings labeled Tannaite where used, ending in the Talmud itself (whichever Talmud we examine, the effect being the same)! Then all things, as now shaped by the rabbis of the Talmud(s), have the standing of Scripture and represent the authority of Moses (now called "our Rabbi"). Accordingly, once the Mishnah enters either of the two Talmuds it nowhere emerges intact. It is wholly preserved, but in bits and pieces, shaped and twisted in whatever ways the Talmuds wish. The Torah now forms a single, continuous statement. And that is the work of the first Talmud, not only of the second.

The Talmuds Distinct from the Mishnah

The question has now to be asked, when do the Talmuds speak for themselves not for the Mishnah? Second, what sorts of units of discourse contain such passages that bear what is "Talmudic" in the two Talmuds? These two questions produce the same answers for both Talmuds, allowing us to characterize the topical or propositional program of the two Talmuds.

[1] Theoretical questions of law not associated with a particular passage of the Mishnah. In the first of the two Talmuds there is some tendency, and in the second, a very marked tendency, to move beyond the legal boundaries set by the Mishnah's rules themselves. More general inquiries are taken up. These of course remain within the framework of the topic of one tractate

or another, although there are some larger modes of thought characteristic of more than a single tractate.

[2] EXEGESIS OF SCRIPTURE SEPARATE FROM THE MISHNAH. It is under this rubric that we find the most important instances in which the Talmuds present materials essentially independent of the Mishnah.

[3] HISTORICAL STATEMENTS. The Talmud contains a fair number of statements that something happened, or narratives about how something happened. While many of these are replete with biblical quotations, in general they do not provide exegesis of Scripture, which serves merely as illustration or reference point.

[4] STORIES ABOUT, AND RULES FOR, SAGES AND DISCIPLES, SEPARATE FROM DISCUSSION OF A PASSAGE OF THE MISHNAH. The Mishnah contains a tiny number of tales about rabbis. These serve principally as precedents for, or illustrations of, rules. The Talmuds by contrast contain a sizable number of stories about sages and their relationships to other people.

When the Talmuds present us with ideas or expressions of a world related to, but fundamentally separate from, that of the Mishnah, that is, when the Talmuds wish to say something other than what the Mishnah says and means, they will take up one of two modes of discourse. Either we find exegesis of biblical passages, with the value system of the rabbis read into the Scriptural tales; or we are told stories about holy men and paradigmatic events, once again through tales told in such a way that a didactic and paranetic purpose is served. It follows that the Talmuds are composites of three kinds of materials, [1] exegeses of the Mishnah (and other materials classified as authoritative, that is, Tannaite), [2] exegeses of Scripture, and [3] accounts of the men who provide both.

Both Talmuds constitute elaborate reworkings of the two antecedent documents: the Mishnah, lacking much reference to Scripture, and the Scripture itself. The Talmuds bring the two together into a synthesis of their compilers' own making, both in reading Scripture into Mishnah, and in reading Scripture alongside of, and separate from, Mishnah.

If, therefore, we want to point to what is Talmudic in either of the two Talmuds it is the exegesis of Scripture, on the one side, and the narration of historical or biographical tales about holy men, on the other. Since much of the biblical exegesis turns upon holy men of biblical times, we may say that the Talmuds speak for themselves alone, as distinct from addressing the problems of the Mishnah, when they tell about holy men now and then. But what is genuinely new in the Talmuds, in comparison and contrast to the Mishnah, is the inclusion of extensive discourse on the meaning imputed to Scripture.

It follows that the two Talmuds stand essentially secondary to two prior documents: Mishnah (encompassing for this purpose the whole corpus labeled Tannaite, whenever and wherever produced, much being later than the Mishnah and some being Babylonian), on the one side, and Scripture, on the other. The Mishnah is read in the Talmuds pretty much within the framework of meaning established by the Mishnah itself. Scripture is read as an account of a world remarkably like that of the rabbis of the Talmuds. When the rabbis speak for themselves, as distinct from the Mishnah, it is through exegesis of Scripture. (But any other mode of reading Scripture, to them, would have been unthinkable. They took for granted that they and Scripture's heroes and sages lived in a single timeless plane.)

TALMUDIC EXEGESIS OF THE MISHNAH

Let us now turn to three more questions, the answers to which equally characterize both Talmuds' programs of exegesis, the counterpart to the topical program of the Mishnah:

[1] What do rabbis in the two Talmuds do in common when they read the Mishnah?

[2] What are their modes of thought, their characteristic ways of analysis?

[3] What do we learn about their world view from the ways in which they receive and interpret the world view they have inherited in the Mishnah?

These are the very questions, we now realize, that the Talmuds answer on their own

account, not only the Mishnah's. The Talmudic exegetes of the Mishnah brought to the document no distinctive program of their own. The exegetes did not know in advance of their approach to a law of the Mishnah facts about the passage not contained within the boundaries of the language of the Mishnah passage itself (except only for facts contained within other units of the same document). Rejecting propositions that were essentially *a priori*, they proposed to explain and expand precisely the wording and the conceptions supplied by the document under study.

In not a single instance did the Mishnah-exegetes in either Talmud appear to twist and turn the language and message of a passage, attempting to make the words mean something other than what they appear to say anyhow. The framers of both Talmuds' reading of the Mishnah take as the measure of truth the clear and present sense of the Mishnah's own language and formulations, rarely asking the Mishnah's rule to confirm a judgment extrinsic to the Mishnah's message. While the Talmuds follow a coherent hermeneutics that is very much their own, there is no exegetical program revealed in the Talmuds' reading of the Mishnah other than that defined, to begin with, by the language and conceptions of one Mishnah-passage or another. Seen whole, the Talmuds appear to be nothing more than secondary developments of the Mishnah. If there is nothing *in particular* that is Talmudic, nonetheless, there is much *in general* that in both Talmuds is Talmudic. This is in entirely familiar respects.

First, the Mishnah was set forth by Judah the Patriarch, who sponsored the document, whole and complete, a profoundly unified, harmonious document. The Talmud insists upon obliterating the marks of coherence. It treats in bits and pieces what was originally meant to speak whole. That simple fact constitutes what is original, stunningly new and, by definition, Talmudic. Second, the Mishnah, also by definition, delivered its message in the way chosen by Judah the Patriarch. That is to say, by producing the document as he did, the Patriarch left no space for the very enterprises of episodic exegesis undertaken so brilliantly by his immediate continuators and heirs.

True, a rather limited process of explanation and gloss of words and phrases, accompanied by a systematic inquiry into the wording of one passage or another, got underway, probably at the very moment, and within the very process, of the Mishnah's closure. But insofar as the larger messages and meanings of the document are conveyed in the ways Judah the Patriarch chose through formalization of language, through contrasts, through successive instances of the same, normally unspecified, general proposition, the need for exegesis was surely not generated by his own program for the Mishnah. Quite to the contrary, Judah chose for his Mishnah a mode of expression and defined for the document a large-scale structure and organization, which, by definition, were meant to stand firm and autonomous. The Mishnah speaks clearly and for itself.

The true power of the two Talmuds emerges when we realize that the Mishnah did not merely come to closure. At the very moment at which it was completed, the Mishnah also formed a closed system, that is, a whole, complete statement that did not require facts outside of its language and formulation, so made no provision for commentary and amplification of brief allusions, as the Talmuds' style assuredly does. The Mishnah refers to nothing beyond itself except, episodically, Scripture. It promises no information other than what is provided within its limits. It raises no questions for ongoing discussion beyond its decisive, final, descriptive statements of enduring realities and fixed relationships.

The Talmuds' single irrevocable judgment is precisely opposite: this text needs a commentary. The Talmuds' first initiative is to reopen the Mishnah's closed system, almost at the moment of its completion and perfection. That is what is Talmudic about the Talmuds: their daring assertion that the concluded and completed demanded clarification and continuation. Once that assertion was made to stick, nothing else mattered very much. The two Talmuds' message was conveyed in the very medium of the Talmud: a new language, focused

upon a new grid of discourse to review a received writing.

In the two Talmuds in common we address a program of criticism of the Mishnah framed by independent and original minds. How is this made manifest? Let us quickly bypass the obvious points of independent judgment, the matter of insistence that the very word choices of the Mishnah require clarification, therefore prove faulty. The meanings and amplification of phrases represent the judgment that Judah's formulation, while stimulating and provocative, left much to be desired. These indications of independence of judgment among people disposed not merely to memorize but to improve upon the text provided by Judah the Patriarch hardly represent judgments of substance. Rather, let us turn to the two most striking: [1] the provision of Scriptural prooftexts for the propositions of various passages of the Mishnah; [2] the rewriting, in the Mishnah's own idiom, if not in its redactional and disciplinary patterns, of much of the law.

As to the former, of course, the message is familiar and clear. The propositions of the Mishnah cannot stand by themselves but must be located within the larger realm of Scriptural authority. As to the latter, the Tosefta's compositions and other Tannaite passages, serving as an exegetical complement to the Mishnah's corresponding passages, imitate the Mishnah. For they are phrased in the way in which the Mishnah's sentences are written (as distinct from the utterly different way in which the Talmuds' own sentences are framed, e.g., in Hebrew rather than in the Talmuds' Aramaic). And yet they show equivalent independence of mind. They indicate that, where sages of the time of the Talmuds took up Mishnaic passages, they were not at all limited to the work of gloss and secondary expansion. They recognized and exercised a quite remarkable freedom of initiative. They undertook to restate in their own words, but imitating the Mishnah's style, the propositions of the Mishnah passage at hand.

That is, they both cite what the Mishnah had said and also continue, in imitation of the Mishnah's language, the discourse of the Mishnah passage itself. These Toseftan or other Tannaite complements to the Mishnah—a vast number of them demonstrably written after the closure of the Mishnah—are Talmudic in two senses. First, they come to expression in the period after the Mishnah had reached closure, as is clear from the fact that the exact language of the Mishnah is cited prior to the labor of extension expansion and revision. So they are the work of the Talmuds' age and authority. Second, they derive from precisely the same authorities responsible for the formation of the Talmud as a whole.

Accordingly, both the insistence upon adducing prooftexts for passages the Patriarch judged not to need them and the persistent revision and expansion of the Mishnah, even in clumsy imitation of the Mishnah's syntax, rhetoric, and word choices, tell us once more this simple truth: the Talmuds are distinctively Talmudic precisely when the Mishnah itself defines the Talmuds' labor, dictates its ideas, displays its rhetoric, determines its results.

The very shift in usable language, from "the Mishnah" (as a whole) to "the Mishnah passage" or "the Mishnaic law at hand" indicates the true state of affairs. On the surface, in all manner of details, the two Talmuds are little more than secondary and derivative documents, explaining the Mishnah itself in trivial ways, or expanding it in a casuistic and logic-chopping manner. But viewing that same surface from a different, more distant perspective and angle, we see things quite differently. In detail the Talmuds changed nothing. Overall, the Talmuds left nothing the same. And, it follows, in general, the two Talmuds stand close together, not only in form, but in program and much else.

In the two Talmuds we find little to deem Talmudic in particular. But in them both, equally, there is much that is talmudic in general. The particular bits and pieces are Mishnaic. But the Talmuds leave nothing of the Mishnah whole and intact. Their work upon the whole presents an essentially new construction. Through the Mishnah, Judah contributed to the Talmuds most of the bricks, but little of the mortar, and none of the joists and beams. The design of the

whole bore no relationship to the Patriarch's plan for the Mishnah. The sages of the Talmud did the rest. They alone imagined, then built, the building. They are the architects, theirs is the vision. The building is a monument to the authority of the sage above all.

What is most definitively indicative of the Talmudic sages' freedom of imagination is the exercise—by each set of authors—of free choice even among the Mishnah's tractates awaiting exegesis. We do not know why some tractates were chosen for Talmudic expansion and others left fallow. We may speculate that the Yerushalmi's omission of all reference to the entire division of Holy Things, on the everyday conduct of the Temple, and to most of the division of Purities, on the sources of uncleanness, objects subject to uncleanness, and modes of removing contamination, constitutes a radical revision of the law of Judaism. What for Judah the Patriarch was close to 50% of the whole story in volume, forming two of his six divisions in structure, for that Talmud's designers was of no importance. That is an amazing fact, attesting on its own to the Talmuds' formulation of their own program and statement, independent of that of the Mishnah even while expressed wholly in the form of a commentary to the Mishnah. Here too, we find the Torah once more subject to (re)definition; nothing of course would be omitted; but choices clearly were made about what is to be brought to the fore.

The Mishnah's Program and the Talmuds' Program

Both Talmuds in common address the tractates of Appointed Times, Women, and Damages, the second, third, and fourth divisions of the Mishnah. That is then where the comparisons and contrasts have to take place. Interest in the division of Appointed Times involved extensive discussion of the conduct of the cult on extraordinary days. Perhaps at issue here was not what had to be omitted (the cult on appointed times) but what people wanted to discuss, the home and village on those same holy occasions. So the former came in the wake of the latter. Inclusion of the divisions of Women, on the family and the transfer of women from father to husband and back, and Damages, on civil law and institutions, is not hard to explain. The sages fully expected to govern the life of Israel, the Jewish people, in its material and concrete aspects. These divisions, as well as some of the tractates of the division on Appointed Times, demanded and received attention. Ample treatment of the laws in the first division, governing the priests' rations and other sacred segments of the agricultural produce of the Holy Land, is to be expected among authorities living not only in, but also off, the Holy Land.

If we stand back and reflect on the Mishnah's program, we recognize how different is that of the respective Talmuds. The Mishnah covers a broad variety of topics. The Talmuds contribute none of their own, but trawl across the entire surface of the Mishnah. The Mishnah is organized topically. The Talmuds may be broken down into discrete compositions and neatly-joined composites, none of them framed as free-standing, topical formations, all of them in one way or another depending upon the Mishnah for order and coherence. The Mishnah lays out rules and facts about a world beyond itself. The Talmuds negotiate rules and recast facts into propositions that concern the Mishnah—a different focus of discourse and perspective altogether. Continuous with the Mishnah, the two Talmuds in point of fact redirect the Mishnah not only by destroying its integrity and picking and choosing with its topical (and propositional) program, but also by forming of the detritus of the received writing a statement of their own. But it was not a statement that, in the end, concerned the Mishnah at all, rather, a statement about the Torah, and a statement of the Torah.

In accepting authority, in centering discourse upon the ideas of other men, in patiently listing even the names behind authoritative laws from olden times to their own day, the sages and framers of the Talmud accomplished exactly the opposite

of what we might have supposed they wanted to do. They made a commentary. On the surface, that suggests they wanted merely to continue and strengthen the received tradition. But they obliterated the text. They loyally explained the Mishnah. But they turned the Mishnah into something else than what it had been. They patiently hammered out chains of tradition, binding themselves to the authority of the remote and holy past. But it was, in the end, a tradition of their own design and choosing. That is, it was not tradition but a new creation. And so these Talmuds of ours, so loyal and subservient to the Mishnah of Judah the Patriarch, turn out to be less reworkings of received materials than works—each one of them—of remarkably independent judgment. The Talmuds speak humbly and subserviently about received truth, always in the name only of Moses and of sages of times past. But in the end it is truth not discovered and demonstrated, but determined and invented and declared.

The redactional program of the men responsible for laying out the materials of Talmuds may now be described. There is a pronounced tendency in both Talmuds to move from close reading of the Mishnah and then Tosefta outward to more general inquiry into the principles of a Mishnah passage and their interplay with those of some other, superficially unrelated passage, and, finally, to more general reflections on law not self-evidently related to the Mishnah passage at hand or to anthologies intersecting only at a general topic. Unlike the Mishnah, the Talmuds reveal no effort to systematize sayings in larger constructions, or to impose a pattern upon all individual sayings. If the Mishnah is framed to facilitate memorization, then we must say that the Talmuds' materials are not framed with mnemonics in mind. If the Mishnah focuses upon subsurface relationships in syntax, the Talmud in the main looks like notes of a discussion. These notes may serve to recreate the larger patterns of argument and reasoning, a summary of what was thought and perhaps also said. The Talmud preserves and expresses concrete ideas, reducing them to brief but usually accessible and obvious statements. The Mishnah speaks of concrete things in order to hint at abstract relationships, which rarely are brought to the surface and fully exposed.

The Mishnah hides. The Talmuds spell out. The Mishnah hints. The Talmuds repeat *ad nauseam*. The Mishnah is subtle, the Talmuds are obvious; the one restrained and tentative, the others aimed at full and exhaustive expression of what is already clear. The sages of the Mishnah rarely represent themselves as deciding cases. Only on unusual occasions do they declare the decided law, at best reticently spelling out what underlies their positions. The rabbis of the Talmuds harp on who holds which opinion and how a case is actually decided, presenting a rich corpus of precedents. They seek to make explicit what is implicit in the law. The Mishnah is immaterial and spiritual, the Talmud earthy and social. The Mishnah deals in the gossamer threads of philosophical principle, the Talmud in the coarse rope that binds this one and that one into a social construction.

The Mishnah speaks of a world in stasis, an unchanging, eternal present tense where all the tensions of chaos are resolved. The Talmuds address the real Israel in the here and now of ever-changing times, the gross matter of disorder and history. Clearly, the central traits of the Mishnah, revealed in the document at its time of closure in ca. 200 C.E., were revised and transformed into those definitive of the Talmud at its time of closure in ca. 400 C.E. for the earlier Talmud, 600 for the later. We know only that when we compare the Mishnah to the Talmuds we find in each case two intertwined documents, quite different from one another both in style and in values. Yet they are so tightly joined that the Talmud appears in the main to provide mere commentary and amplification for the Mishnah. So in important, superficial traits the two Talmuds are indistinguishable.

JACOB NEUSNER

Rabbinic Judaism, Formative Canon of, III: The Aggadic Documents. Midrash: The Earlier Compilations

We consider the documents that are generally considered to belong to the first period in the collection and preservation of exegeses of Scripture. These cover Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. (Important scholarly opinion assigns the compilation on Exodus to a much later period.)

Mekhilta Attributed to R. Ishmael (Exodus)

Mekhilta Attributed to R. Ishmael seen in the aggregate presents a composite of three kinds of materials concerning the book of Exodus. The first is a set of *ad hoc* and episodic exegeses of some passages of Scripture. The second is a group of propositional and argumentative essays in exegetical form, in which theological principles are set forth and demonstrated. The third consists of topical articles, some of them sustained, many of them well crafted, about important subjects of the Judaism of the dual Torah. The document forms a sustained address to the book of Exodus, covering Exod. 12:1–23:19, Exod. 31:12–13, and Exod. 35:1–3. It comprises nine tractates, Pisha (Exod. 12:1–13:16), Beshallah (Exod. 13–17, 14–31), Shirata (Exod. 15:1–21), Vayassa (Exod. 22–17:7), Amalek (Exod. 17:8–18:27), Bahodesh (Exod. 19:1–20:26), Neziqin (Exod. 21:1– 22:23), Kaspa (Exod. 22:24–23:19), and Shabbata (Exod. 31:12–17 and 35:1–3). There are eighty-two sections, subdivided into paragraphs. The division of the book of Exodus has no bearing on the lections read in the synagogue as we now know them. The document is variously dated, but ca. 250 is presently favored by many scholars, but rejected with reason by others.

In Mekhilta Attributed to R. Ishmael, we find a compilation of Midrash-exegeses the authorship of which did not write with Scripture at all. Providing this encyclopedia of information concerning theology and normative behavior for the authorship of Mekhilta Attributed to R. Ishmael did not require a sustained demonstration of a position, whether whole or even in part, distinctive to that authorship and distinct from positions set forth by other authorships. These compilers encountered and utilized Scripture in a very different way. For the authorship of Mekhilta Attributed to R. Ishmael, Scripture is inert. That is to say, it is a source of information, texts that prove propositions. It also is the foundation of the organization of discourse. But when people wish to say things, they say them *about* Scripture, not through Scripture or with Scripture.

Accordingly, what we have in Mekhilta Attributed to R. Ishmael falls into a different category altogether: the document comprises the first scriptural encyclopedia of Judaism. A scriptural encyclopedia joins together expositions of topics, disquisitions on propositions, in general precipitated by the themes of scriptural narrative or the dictates of biblical law, and collects and arranges in accord with Scripture's order and program the exegeses—paraphrases or brief explanations—of clauses of biblical verses. The nine authorships of Mekhilta Attributed to R. Ishmael treat as a given, that is to say, a corpus of facts or, more aptly, a body of tradition, what the other authorships or compilers of Midrash-compositions set forth as components of a system that requires defense and demands apologetic exposition. For our authorship, the facts comprise a corpus of information, to which people require ready access. By setting forth an important component of information, that is, the data of revealed truths of the Judaism of the dual Torah, that authorship provides such access. What is needed, then, is an encyclopedia of things one should know on themes Scripture dictates, and the sequence of topics and propositions, in the order demanded by Scripture, results.

A model for long centuries to come Mekhilta Attributed to R. Ishmael attracted

many imitators and continuators. The conception of collecting information and holding it together upon the frame of Scripture attracted many, so that a vast literature of Midrash-compilation much like this compilation came into being in succeeding periods. Not one but dozens, ultimately hundreds, of Midrash-compilations, interesting, traditional, and, of course, pointless and merely informative, would fill the shelves of the library that emerged from the canon of the Judaism of the dual Torah. Accordingly, Mekhilta Attributed to R. Ishmael stood at the beginning of centuries of work carried on in the pattern set by that authorship. There would be only one Bavli, but many, many Midrash-compilations: Mekhiltas, Yalquts, Midrash-this and Midrash-that, and, in due course, a secondary development would call into being commentaries to Scripture (as to the Bavli) as well. So Mekhilta Attributed to R. Ishmael formed not only a scriptural encyclopedia of Judaism, but, as it turned out, the first of many, many such compilations of revealed, received truth, set forth in the framework of the written Torah.

Lacking all interest in cogent and sustained argumentation and demonstration of propositions set forth for argument, the authorship of Mekhilta Attributed to R. Ishmael scarcely aspires to make a full and important, well-composed and proportioned statement of its own. The nine tractates of Mekhilta Attributed to R. Ishmael, moreover, prove discrete. We have to take account of a document behind which, even at the end product, stand nine authorships, not one single authorship whose hand is evident through. For in formal and logical traits, all the more so in topical program, the nine tractates are scarcely cogent when seen whole and complete. They make no one point over and over again. They undertake no sustained, methodical analysis that joins bits and pieces of exegesis into a large-scale composition, bearing meaning. They do not pursue a single range of problems in such a way as through discrete results to demonstrate in many ways a single cogent position.

It follows that, while the authorship of Mekhilta Attributed to R. Ishmael sets forth propositions, these overall do not serve to organize or impose cogency upon the document as a whole. That is why it is an encyclopedia, cogent in the pieces, but not overall. Only one tractate, Neziqin, clearly exhibits fundamental cogency, since, in the main, it follows a single program of exegesis, aimed at establishing a set of uniform conceptual results. These, briefly stated, point to the conclusions that [1] cases may be generalized into rules; [2] Scripture does not repeat itself even when it covers the same legal subjects more than once; [3] the categories that make sense of reality derive from Scripture's classification of things, not from the traits of things viewed independently of Scripture. The other eight tractates into which the document is divided present a variety of conclusions.

That miscellaneous character of the whole should not obscure the fact that the parts really do form coherent statements, each on its own. Indeed, what makes the document interesting is the laconic and uncontroversial character of its discourse. Its framers clearly take for granted that what they are telling us are the established, accepted truths of the faith. That is why they can find it appropriate just to collect and present information, certain of the knowledge that everyone knows what they say is so. The main points that this Midrash-compilation makes in its several parts may be conveniently divided into three classifications: [1] generalizations about the character of Scripture, [2] rules for correct conduct, and [3] theological teachings, with special reference to the relationship between Israel and God and the implications of that relationship for the fate of Israel among the nations. The first two are in volume and intellectual dimensions not imposing, the third is enormous and important, bearing the weight of the burden of our document.

Traits of Scripture

The order in which Scripture sets forth two or more propositions does not necessarily indicate the priority assigned to those items. Scripture itself will dictate priority. Scripture uses euphemistic language. Scripture is not bound by temporal considerations, e.g., of sequence.

The moral life in Israel

When one party pays respect to another, they speak in harmony. With the measure with which one metes out to others is one's own reward meted out. Whoever welcomes a fellow is as if one welcomed the face of the Presence of God. Do not favor either rich or poor in judging a case.

Theological Convictions

These add up to a great collection of the basic theses of the theology of the Judaism of the dual Torah.

Through doing religious duties Israel was redeemed, and preparation of the rite well in advance was the religious duty to which redemption for Israel would serve as reward. What God says he will do, he does. Wherever Scripture indicates that God has said something, we can find in some other passage precisely where and what he had said. The upshot, of course, is that by carefully reading Scripture, we are able to identify the rules that govern history and salvation. The vindication of Moses's demands turns the demands into prophecies of precisely what would come about. This further is underlined by the careful delineation of the degradation and humiliation of Pharaoh, portrayed as running about. And then comes the striking contrast between the reverence in which Israelites hold the rule of God and the humiliation of the Egyptian ruler. People get what is coming to them. Divine punishment is inexorable, so too divine reward. When God exacts punishment on the nations, his name is made great in the world. Merit saved Israel at the sea. The issue to be pursued is, what sort of merit, e.g., deriving from what actions or persons? The acts of healing of the Holy One, blessed be he, are not like the acts of healing of mortals. The redemption at the sea prefigures the redemption at the end of time. Faith in God is what saves Israel.

God punishes the arrogant person by exacting a penalty precisely from that about which such a person takes pride. With that in which the nations of the world take pride before him he exacts punishment from them. Numerous cases on a long line of instances, based upon historical facts provided by Scripture, serve to demonstrate that proposition. Israel is unique among the nations. Mortals have the power to praise and glorify God. God takes many forms. The Lord is master of all media of war. The Lord needs none of those media. The Lord is a man of war, but the Lord is in no way comparable to a man of war, making war in a supernatural way, specifically by retaining, even while making war, the attributes of mercy and humanity. God is just, and God's justice insures that the worthy are rewarded and the unworthy are penalized. God responds to human actions and attitudes. Those who oppose Israel are as though they opposed God. God is unique and God's salvation at the sea will be repeated at the end of time.

Israel gained great merit because it alone was willing to accept the ten commandments. The Israelites deserve praise for accepting the Torah. The "other gods" are not really gods at all. They are called "other" for various theological reasons. Suffering is precious and will not be rejected. One must not act in regard to God the way the outsiders treat their gods. They honor their gods in good times, not in bad, but Israel, exemplified by Job, honors God in bad time as much as in good. These fundamental principles of faith hardly exhaust the allusions to, or representations of, theological and normative statements in Mekhilta Attributed to R. Ishmael. They represent only those convictions that are spelled out in massive detail and argued with great force, the points of emphasis within a vast fabric of faith.

While familiar, these propositions form a miscellany. The characterization of the propositional message of our authorship(s) strongly suggests that we are dealing with a repertoire of standard and established, normative dogmas of the Judaism of the dual Torah. Nothing in the representation just now set forth points toward controversy or can be shown to contradict convictions contained within other documents. In Mekhilta Attributed to R. Ishmael we deal with a compilation of teachings, not a sustained argument: a systematic presentation of conventions, not a focused argument in

behalf of distinct and urgent propositions.

Compared to other Midrash-compilations Mekhilta Attributed to R. Ishmael therefore is abnormal in two aspects. First, it is animated by no paramount questions and does not lay out compelling and sharply-etched responses to them. Second, it is not predominantly a propositional writing at all. So in its topical and propositional character, this document differs from others of its classification. If the others bear singular messages, Mekhilta Attributed to R. Ishmael speaks in eternal verities, which, in the context of controversy, enjoy the authority of accepted commonplaces, or, less cordially classified, mere banalities—theological truths, but routine and broadly-acknowledged ones. If the others employ as their paramount mode of discourse propositional compositions, this compilation is first of all exegetical and miscellaneous, and only in moderate measure, propositional at all. Other compilations prove points and bear a weighty message; this one does not.

Sifra (to Leviticus)

Sifra, a compilation of Midrash-exegeses on the book of Leviticus, forms a massive and systematic statement concerning the definition of the Mishnah in relationship to Scripture. Unlike the other Midrash-compilations that concern the Pentateuch, the two Sifrés and Mekhilta Attributed to R. Ishmael, the document is programmatically cogent, beginning to end, in its sustained treatment of the issues defined by the Mishnah. For the heirs of the Mishnah, the relationship of the Mishnah with Scripture—in mythic language, of the oral to the written part of the Torah—required definition. The authorship of Sifra composed the one document to accomplish the union of the two Torahs, Scripture, or the written Torah, and the Mishnah, or the oral Torah.

This was achieved not merely formally by provision of proof texts from Scripture for statements of the Mishnah—as in the two Talmuds—but through a profound analysis of the interior structure of thought. It was by means of the critique of practical logic and the rehabilitation of the probative logic of hierarchical classification (accomplished through the form of *Listenwissenschaft*) in particular that the authorship of Sifra accomplished this remarkable feat of intellect. That authorship achieved the (re-)union of the two Torahs into a single cogent statement within the framework of the written Torah by penetrating into the deep composition of logic that underlay the creation of the world in its correct components, rightly classified, and in its right order, as portrayed by the Torah.

This was done in two ways. It involved, first of all, systematically demolishing the logic that sustains an autonomous Mishnah, which appeals to the intrinsic traits of things to accomplish classification and hierarchization. Secondly, it was done by demonstrating the dependency, for the identification of the correct classification of things, not upon the traits of things viewed in the abstract, but upon the classification of things by Scripture in particular. The framers of Sifra recast the two parts of the Torah into a single coherent statement through unitary and cogent discourse. So in choosing, as to structure, a book of the Pentateuch, and, as to form, the exegetical form involving paraphrase and amplification of a phrase of a base-text of Scripture, the authorship of Sifra made its entire statement *in nuce*. Then by composing a document that for very long stretches simply cannot have been put together without the Mishnah and at the same time subjecting the generative logical principles of the Mishnah to devastating critique, that same authorship took up its position. The destruction of the Mishnah as an autonomous and freestanding statement, based upon its own logic, is followed by the reconstruction of (large tracts of the Mishnah) as a statement wholly within, and in accord with, the logic and program of the written Torah in Leviticus. That is what defines Sifra, the one genuinely cogent and sustained statement among the four Midrash-compilations that present exegetical discourse on the Pentateuch.

The dominant approach to uniting the two Torahs, oral and written, into a single cogent statement, involved reading the written Torah into the oral. In form this was done through inserting into the Mishnah

(that is, the oral Torah) a long sequence of proof texts. The other solution required reading the oral Torah into the written one, by inserting into the written Torah citations and allusions to the oral one, and, as a matter of fact, also by demonstrating, on both philosophical and theological grounds, the utter subordination and dependency of the oral Torah, the Mishnah, to the written Torah—while at the same time defending and vindicating that same oral Torah. Sifra, followed unsystematically to be sure by the two Sifrés, did just that. Sifra's authorship attempted to set forth the dual Torah as a single, cogent statement, doing so by reading the Mishnah into Scripture not merely for proposition but for expression of proposition. On the surface that decision represented a literary, not merely a theological, judgment. But within the deep structure of thought, it was far more than a mere matter of how to select and organize propositions.

That judgment upon the Mishnah forms part of the polemic of Sifra's authorship—but only part of it. Sifra's authorship conducts a sustained polemic against the failure of the Mishnah to cite Scripture very much or systematically to link its ideas to Scripture through the medium of formal demonstration by exegesis. Sifra's rhetorical exegesis follows a standard redactional form. Scripture will be cited. Then a statement will be made about its meaning, or a statement of law correlative to that Scripture will be given. That statement sometimes cites the Mishnah, often verbatim. Finally, the author of Sifra invariably states, "Now is that not (merely) logical?" And the point of that statement will be, Can this position not be gained through the working of mere logic, based upon facts supplied (to be sure) by Scripture?

The polemical power of Sifra lies in its repetitive demonstration that the stated position, citation of a Mishnah-pericope, is not only not the product of logic, but is, and only can be, the product of exegesis of Scripture. That is only part of the matter, but that component of the larger judgment of Sifra's authorship does make the point that the Mishnah is subordinated to Scripture and validated only through Scripture. In that regard, the authorship of Sifra stands at one with the position of the authorships of the other successor-writings, even though Sifra's writers carried to a much more profound level of thought the critique of the Mishnah. They did so by rethinking the logical foundations of the entire Torah.

The framers of the Mishnah effect their classification-structures (sets of things that are alike, therefore follow the same rule, by contrast to sets of things that are unlike and follow the opposite rule) through the traits of things. The authorship of Sifra insists that the source of classification is Scripture. Sifra's authorship time and again demonstrates that classification cannot be carried out without Scripture's data, and, it must follow, hierarchical arguments based on extra-scriptural taxa always fail. In the Mishnah we seek connection between fact and fact, sentence and sentence, by comparing and contrasting two things that are like and not alike. At the logical level the Mishnah falls into the category of familiar philosophical thought. Once we seek regularities, we propose rules. What is like another thing falls under its rule, and what is not like the other falls under the opposite rule. Accordingly, as to the species of the genus, so far as they are alike, they share the same rule. So far as they are not alike, each follows a rule contrary to that governing the other.

So the work of analysis is what produces connection, and therefore the drawing of conclusions derives from comparison and contrast: the *and*, the *equal*. The proposition then that forms the conclusion concerns the essential likeness of the two offices, except where they are different, but the subterranean premise is that we can explain both likeness and difference by appeal to a principle of fundamental order and unity. To make these observations concrete, we turn to the case at hand. The important contrast comes at the outset. The high priest and king fall into a single genus, but speciation, based on traits particular to the king, then distinguishes the one from the other. All of this exercise is conducted essentially independently of Scripture; the classifications derive from the system, are viewed as autonomous constructs; traits of things define classifications and dictate what is like and what is unlike.

In Sifra no one denies the principle of hierarchical classification. That is an established fact, a self-evident trait of mind. The argument of Sifra's authorship is that, by themselves, things do not possess traits that permit us finally to classify species into a common genus. There always are traits distinctive to a classification. Accordingly, it is the argument of Sifra's authorship that without the revelation of the Torah, we are not able to effect any classification at all, are left, that is to say, only with species, no genus, only with cases, no rules. The thrust of Sifra's authorship's attack on the Mishnah's taxonomic logic is readily discerned. Time and again, we can easily demonstrate, things have so many and such diverse and contradictory indicative traits that, comparing one thing to something else, we can always distinguish one species from another. Even though we find something in common, we also can discern some other trait characteristic of one thing but not the other. Consequently, we also can show that the hierarchical logic on which we rely, the argument *a fortiori* or *qol vehomer*, will not serve. For if on the basis of one set of traits that yield a given classification, we place into hierarchical order two or more items, on the basis of a different set of traits, we have either a different classification altogether, or, much more commonly, simply a different hierarchy. So the attack on the way in which the Mishnah's authorship has done its work appeals not merely to the limitations of classification solely on the basis of traits of things. The more telling argument addresses what is, to *Listenwissenschaft*, the source of power and compelling proof: hierarchization. That is why, throughout, we must designate the Mishnah's mode of *Listenwissenschaft* a logic of hierarchical classification. Things are not merely like or unlike, therefore following one rule or its opposite. Things also are weightier or less weighty, and that particular point of likeness of difference generates the logical force of *Listenwissenschaft*.

Sifra's authorship repeatedly demonstrates the formation of classifications based on monothetic taxonomy. What that means is this: traits that are not only common to both items but that are shared throughout both of the items subject to comparison and contrast, simply will not serve. These shared traits are supposed to prove that the items that are compared are alike, and therefore should be subjected to the same rule. But the allegation of comparability proves flawed. The proposition maintains that the two items are alike, because they share one trait in common (thus: "monothetic taxonomy"). But they also exhibit traits that are different for the respective items. Then we have both likeness and difference.

Then, the argument proceeds, at every point at which someone alleges uniform, that is to say, monothetic likeness, Sifra's authorship will demonstrate difference. Then how to proceed? Appeal to some shared traits as a basis for classification: this is not like that, and that is not like this, but the indicative trait that both exhibit is such and so, that is to say, polythetic taxonomy. The self-evident problem in accepting differences among things and insisting, nonetheless, on their mono-morphic character for purposes of comparison and contrast, cannot be set aside: who says? That is, if we can adduce in evidence for a shared classification of things only a few traits among many characteristic of each thing, then what stops me from treating all things alike? Polythetic taxonomy opens the way to an unlimited exercise in finding what diverse things have in common and imposing, for that reason, one rule on everything. Then the very working of *Listenwissenschaft* as a tool of analysis, differentiation, comparison, contrast, and the descriptive determination of rules yields the opposite of what is desired. Chaos, not order, a mass of exceptions, no rules, a world of examples, each subject to its own regulation, instead of a world of order and proportion, composition and stability, will result.

Sifra and the Mishnah

While setting forth its critique of the Mishnah's utilization of the logic of comparison and contrast in hierarchical classification, the authorship of Sifra is careful not to criticize the Mishnah. Its position favors restating the Mishnah within the context of

Scripture, not rejecting the conclusions of the Mishnah, let alone its authority. Consequently, when we find a critique of applied reason divorced from Scripture, we rarely uncover an explicit critique of the Mishnah, and when we find a citation of the Mishnah, we rarely uncover linkage to the ubiquitous principle that Scripture forms the source of all classification and hierarchy. When the Mishnah is cited by our authorship, it will be presented as part of the factual substrate of the Torah. When the logic operative throughout the Mishnah is subjected to criticism, the language of the Mishnah will rarely, if ever, be cited in context. The operative language in dealing with the critique of the applied logic of *Listenwissenschaft* as represented by the framers of the Mishnah ordinarily is, "is it not a matter of logic?" Then the sorts of arguments against taxonomy pursued outside of the framework of Scripture's classifications will follow. When, by contrast, the authorship of Sifra wishes to introduce into the context it has already established a verbatim passage of the Mishnah, it will ordinarily, though not always, use, *mikan amru*, which, in context, means, "in this connection [sages] have said." It is a simple fact that when the intent is to demolish improper reasoning, the Mishnah's rules in the Mishnah's language rarely, if ever, occur. When the authorship of Sifra wishes to incorporate paragraphs of the Mishnah into their re-presentation of The Torah, they will do so either without fanfare or by the neutral joining-language "in this connection [sages] have said."

The authorship of Sifra never called into question the self-evident validity of taxonomic logic. Its critique is addressed only to how the Mishnah's framers identify the origins of, and delineate, classification-units. But that critique proves fundamental to the case that that authorship proposed to make. For, intending to demonstrate that *The Torah* was a proper noun, and that everything that was valid came to expression in the single, cogent statement of The Torah, the authorship at hand identified the fundamental issue. It is the debate over the way we know things. In insisting, in agreement with the framers of the Mishnah, that there are not only cases but also rules, not only species but also genera, the authorship of Sifra also made its case in behalf of the case for The Torah as a proper noun. This carries us to the theological foundation for Sifra's authorship's sustained critique of applied reason.

At stake is the character of The Torah. We may phrase the question in this way: exactly what do we want to learn from, or discern within The Torah? And the answer to that question requires theological, not merely literary and philosophical, reflection on our part. For in their delineation of correct hierarchical logic, our authorship uncovered within The Torah (hence by definition, written and oral components of The Torah alike) an adumbration of the working of the mind of God. That is because the premise of all discourse is that The Torah was written by God and dictated by God to Moses at Sinai. And that will in the end explain why our authorship for its part has entered into The Torah long passages of not merely clarification but active intrusion, making itself a component of the interlocutorial process. To what end we know: it was to unite the dual Torah. The authorship of Sifra proposed to regain access to the modes of thought that guided the formation of the Torah, oral and written alike: comparison and contrast in this way, not in that, identification of categories in one manner, not in another. Since those were the modes of thought that, in our authorship's conception, dictated the structure of intellect upon which the Torah, the united Torah, rested, a simple conclusion is the sole possible one.

In their analysis of the deepest structures of intellect of the Torah, the authorship of Sifra presumed to enter into the mind of God, showing how God's mind worked when God formed the Torah, written and oral alike. And there, in the intellect of God, in their judgment humanity gained access to the only means of uniting the Torah, because that is where the Torah originated. But in discerning how God's mind worked, the intellectuals who created Sifra claimed for themselves a place in that very process of thought that had given birth to The Torah. Our authorship could rewrite the Torah

because, knowing how The Torah originally was written, they too could write (though not reveal) The Torah.

For its topical program the authorship of Sifra takes the book of Leviticus. For propositions Sifra's authorship presents episodic and ad hoc sentences. If we ask how these sentences form propositions other than amplifications of points made in the book of Leviticus itself, and how we may restate those propositions in a coherent way, nothing sustained and coherent emerges. Sifra does not constitute a propositional document transcending its precipitating text. But that in no way bears the implication that the document's authorship merely collected and arranged this and that about the book of Leviticus. For three reasons, we must conclude that Sifra does not set forth propositions in the way in which the Rabbah-compilations and Sifré to Deuteronomy do.

First, in general there is no topical program distinct from that of Scripture. Sifra remains wholly within Scripture's orbit and range of discourse, proposing only to expand and clarify what it found within Scripture. Where the authorship moves beyond Scripture, it is not toward fresh theological or philosophical thought, but rather to a quite different set of issues altogether, concerning the Mishnah and Tosefta. When we describe the topical program of the document, the blatant and definitive trait of Sifra is simple: the topical program and order derive from Scripture. Just as the Mishnah defines the topical program and order for the Tosefta, the Yerushalmi, and the Bavli, so Scripture does so for Sifra. It follows that Sifra takes as its structure the plan and program of the written Torah, by contrast to the decision of the framers or compilers of Tosefta and the two Talmuds.

Second, for sizable passages, the sole point of coherence for the discrete sentences or paragraphs of Sifra's authorship derives from the base-verse of Scripture that is subject to commentary. That fact corresponds to the results of form-analysis and the description of the logics of cogent discourse. While the Mishnah holds thought together through propositions of various kinds, with special interest in demonstrating propositions through a well-crafted program of logic of a certain kind, Sifra's authorship appeals to a different logic altogether.

The third fundamental observation draws attention to the paramount position, within this restatement of the written Torah, of the oral Torah. We may say very simply that, in a purely formal and superficial sense, a sizable proportion of Sifra consists simply in the association of completed statements of the oral Torah with the exposition of the written Torah, the whole *re*-presenting as one whole Torah the dual Torah received by Moses at Sinai (speaking within the Torah-myth). Even at the very surface we observe a simple fact. Without the Mishnah or the Tosefta, our authorship will have had virtually nothing to say about one passage after another of the written Torah. Far more often than citing the Mishnah or the Tosefta verbatim, our authorship cites principles of law or theology fundamental to the Mishnah's treatment of a given topic, even when the particular passage of the Mishnah or the Tosefta that sets forth those principles is not cited verbatim.

That brings us to the positive side of the picture. While Sifra in detail presents no paramount propositions, as a whole it demonstrates a highly-distinctive and vigorously-demonstrated proposition. We should drastically misunderstand the document if the miscellaneous character of the parts obscured the powerful statement made by the whole. For while in detail we cannot reconstruct a topical program other than that of Scripture, viewed in its indicative and definitive traits of rhetoric, logic, and implicit proposition, Sifra does take up a well-composed position on a fundamental issue, namely, the relationship between the written Torah, represented by the book of Leviticus, and the oral Torah, represented by the passages of the Mishnah deemed by the authorship of Sifra to be pertinent to the book of Leviticus. Sifra joins the two Torahs into a single statement, accomplishing a re-presentation of the written Torah in topic and in program and in the logic of cogent discourse, and within that rewriting of the written Torah, a re-presentation of the oral Torah in its paramount problematic

and in many of its substantive propositions. Stated simply, the written Torah provides the form, the oral Torah, the content. What emerges is not merely a united, dual Torah, but *The* Torah, stated whole and complete, in the context defined by the book of Leviticus.

The three basic and definitive topical traits of Sifra, are, first, its total adherence to the topical program of the written Torah for order and plan; second, its very common reliance upon the phrases or verses of the written Torah for the joining into coherent discourse of discrete thoughts, e.g., comments on, or amplifications of, words or phrases; and third, its equally profound dependence upon the oral Torah for its program of thought: the problematic that defines the issues the authorship wishes to explore and resolve.

Sifre to Numbers

Sifré to Numbers provides a miscellaneous reading of most of the book of Numbers, but examining the implicit propositions of the recurrent forms of the document yields a clear-cut purpose. The document follows no topical program; but it also is unlike Mekhilta Attributed to R. Ishmael because of its recurrent effort to prove a few fundamental points. True, these are general and not limited to a given set of cases or issues, so that the successive compositions that comprise Sifré to Numbers yield no propositional program. But the recurrent proofs of discrete propositions that time and again bear one and the same implication do accumulate and when we see what is implicit in the various explicit exercises, we find a clear-cut and rather rich message indeed.

The document as a whole through its fixed and recurrent formal preferences or literary structures makes two complementary points. Reason unaided by Scripture produces uncertain propositions, and reason operating within the limits of Scripture produces truth. These two principles are never articulated but left implicit in the systematic reading of most of the book of Numbers, verse by verse. The exegetical forms stand for a single proposition: the human mind joins God's mind when humanity receives and sets forth the Torah. The Torah opens the road into the mind of God, and our minds can lead us on that road, because our mind and God's mind are comparable. We share a common rationality. Only when we examine the rhetorical plan and then in search of the topical program reconsider the forms of the document does this propositional program emerge.

As with Sifra, therefore, Sifré to Numbers follows no topical program distinct from that of Scripture, which is systematically clarified. An interest in the relations to Scripture of the Mishnah and Tosefta, a concern with the dialectics characteristic of Sifra—these occur episodically, but scarcely define the character of the document. Its topical program and order derive from Scripture. As with Sifra, here too the sole point of coherence for the discrete sentences or paragraphs derives from the base-verse of Scripture that is subject to commentary. At the same time, if we examine the incremental message, the cumulative effect of the formal traits of speech and thought revealed in the uniform rhetoric and syntax of the document, we may discern a propositional program that is implicit in the rhetoric and logic of the compilation.

The rhetorical form underlines the priority of not proposition, hence reason, but process, hence the exegesis of Scripture. The way chosen to accomplish this goal is to begin at all points with a verse of Scripture and demonstrate that only by starting with the word-choices and propositions of that verse of Scripture, all further progress of interpretation commences. But the second proposition, that man has a place in the process of revealing the Torah of Sinai, comes to expression in the careful separation of the cited verse of the written Torah from the contribution of the contemporary exegete. In that formal preference too, the authorship made a major point and established—if implicitly—a central syllogism: God's will follows the rules of reason. Man can investigate the consequences of reason as expressed in God's will. Therefore man can join in the labor of exploring God's will in the Torah. The appeal to Scripture, however, comes once the proposition is

established, and that appeal then dictates the rhetoric and topic alike. Only when we know what question we bring to Scripture may we devise appropriate formal and programmatic policies for our Midrash-exegesis and Midrash-compilation alike. A second formal preference in all three documents, in addition to the exegetical form, makes the same point. The other form involves citation of a passage of the Mishnah followed by an extensive discourse on how the verse of Scripture that pertains to the topic of that Mishnah-passage must contribute its facts, revealed at Sinai, if we wish to know the truth. Reason alone, which is systematically tested through a sequence of propositions shown to fail, will not serve.

Sifre to Deuteronomy

Out of cases and examples, sages seek generalizations and governing principles. Since in the book of Deuteronomy, Moses explicitly sets forth a vision of Israel's future history, sages in Sifré to Deuteronomy examined that vision to uncover the rules that explain what happens to Israel. That issue drew attention from cases to rules, with the result that, in the book of Deuteronomy, they set forth a systematic account of Israel's future history, the key to Israel's recovery of command of its destiny. Like Sifra, Sifré to Deuteronomy pursues a diverse topical program in order to demonstrate a few fundamental propositions. The survey of the topical and propositional program of Sifré to Deuteronomy dictates what is truly particular to that authorship. It is its systematic mode of methodical analysis, in which it does two things. First, the document's compilers take the details of cases and carefully re-frame them into rules pertaining to all cases. The authorship therefore asks those questions of susceptibility to generalization ("generalizability") that first-class philosophical minds raise. And it answers those questions by showing what details restrict the prevailing law to the conditions of the case, and what details exemplify the encompassing traits of the law overall. These are, after all, the two possibilities. The law is either limited to the case and to all cases that replicate this one. Or the law derives from the principles exemplified, in detail, in the case at hand. Essentially, as a matter of both logic and topical program, our authorship has reread the legal portions of the book of Deuteronomy and turned Scripture into what we now know is the orderly and encompassing code supplied by the Mishnah. To state matters simply, this authorship "mishnaizes" Scripture. We find in Sifré to Numbers no parallel to this dominant and systematic program of Sifré to Deuteronomy.

But in other aspects, the document presents no surprises. In the two Sifrés and Sifra we find a recurrent motif, intense here, episodic there, of how the written component of the Torah, that is, revelation in written form, serves as the sole source of final truth. Logic or reason untested against Scripture produces flawed or unreliable results. The Torah, read as rabbis read it, and that alone proves par-amount. Reason on its own is subordinate. For their search for the social rules of Israel's society, the priority of the covenant as a reliable account of the workings of reality, and the prevailing laws of Israel's history decreed by the terms of the covenant, their fundamental claim is the same. There are rules and regularities, but reason alone will not show us what they are. A systematic and reasoned reading of the Torah—the written Torah—joined to a sifting of the cases of the Torah in search of the regularities and points of law and order—these are what will tell the prevailing rule. A rule of the Mishnah and its account of the here and now of everyday life rests upon the Torah, not upon (mere) logic. A rule of Israel's history, past, present, and future, likewise derives from a search for regularities and points of order identified not by logic alone, but by logic addressed to the Torah. So there are these modes of gaining truth that apply equally to Mishnah and Scripture. There is logic, applied reason and practical wisdom, such as sages exhibit; there is the corpus of facts supplied by Scripture, read as sages read it. These two together form God's statement upon the world today.

The topical program of the document intersects at its fundamental propositions

with programs of other authorships—beginning, after all, with those of Scripture itself. The writers and compilers and compositors of Deuteronomy itself will have found entirely familiar such notions as the conditional character of Israel's possession of the land of Israel, the centrality of the covenant in Israel's relationship with God and with the other nations of the world, and the decisive role of the covenant in determining its own destiny, and the covenantal responsibilities and standing of Israel's leadership—surely a considerable motif in the very structure of the book of Deuteronomy itself, beginning and end in particular. The reader may well wonder how we may treat as a distinctive authorship a group of writers who simply go over ground familiar in the received literature. In some important ways the authorship of Sifré to Deuteronomy makes a statement that is very much its own. That fact becomes clear when we consider the document's rhetorical, logical, and topical characteristics.

Four principal topics encompass the document's propositions, of which the first three correspond to the three relationships into which Israel entered: with heaven, on earth, and within. These yield systematic statements that concern the relationships between Israel and God, with special reference to the covenant, the Torah, and the land; Israel and the nations, with interest in Israel's history, past, present, and future, and how that cyclic is to be known; Israel on its own terms, with focus upon Israel's distinctive leadership. The fourth rubric encompasses not specific *ad hoc* propositions, that form aggregates of proofs of large truths, but rather, prevailing modes of thought, demonstrating the inner structure of intellect, in our document yielding the formation, out of the cases of Scripture, of encompassing rules.

Israel and God: The Implications of the Covenant: The basic proposition, spelled out in detail, is that Israel stands in a special relationship with God, and that relationship is defined by the contract, or covenant, that God made with Israel. The covenant comes to particular expression, in our document, in two matters, first, the land, second, the Torah. Each marks Israel as different from all other nations, on the one side, and as selected by God, on the other. In these propositions, sages situate Israel in the realm of heaven, finding on earth the stigmata of covenanted election and concomitant requirement of loyalty and obedience to the covenant.

First comes the definition of those traits of God that our authorship finds pertinent. God sits in judgment upon the world, and his judgment is true and righteous. God punishes faithlessness. But God's fundamental and definitive trait is mercy. The way of God is to be merciful and gracious. The basic relationship of Israel to God is one of God's grace for Israel. God's loyalty to Israel endures, even when Israel sins. When Israel forgets God, God is pained. Israel's leaders, whatever their excellence, plead with God only for grace, not for their own merit. Correct attitudes in prayer derive from the need for grace, Israel having slight merit on its own account. Israel should follow only God, carrying out religious deeds as the covenant requires, in accord with the instructions of prophets. Israel should show mercy to others, in the model of God's merciful character.

Second, the contract, or covenant, produces the result that God has acquired Israel, which God created. The reason is that only Israel accepted the Torah, among all the nations, and that is why God made the covenant with Israel in particular. Why is the covenant made only with Israel? The gentiles did not accept the Torah, Israel did, and that has made all the difference. Israel recognized God forthwith; the very peace of the world and of nature depends upon God's giving the Torah to Israel. That is why Israel is the sole nation worthy of dwelling in the palace of God and that is the basis for the covenant too. The covenant secures for Israel an enduring relationship of grace with God. The covenant cannot be revoked and endures forever. The covenant, terms of which are specified in the Torah, has duplicate terms: if you do well, you will bear a blessing, and if not, you will bear a curse.

That is the singular mark of the covenant between God and Israel. A mark of the covenant is the liberation from Egypt, and

that sufficed to impose upon Israel God's claim for their obedience. An important sign of the covenant is the possession of the land. Part of the covenant is the recognition of merit of the ancestors. In judging the descendants of the patriarchs and matriarchs, God promised, in making the covenant, recognition of the meritorious deeds of the ancestors. The conquest of the land and inheriting it are marks of the covenant, which Israel will find easy because of God's favor. The inheritance of the land is a mark of merit, inherited from the ancestors. The land is higher than all others and more choice. All religious duties are important, those that seem trivial as much as those held to be weightier.

God always loves Israel. That is why Israel should carry out the religious duties of the Torah with full assent. All religious duties are equally precious. Israel must be whole-hearted in its relationship with God. If it is, then its share is with God, and if not, then not. But Israel may hate God. The right attitude toward God is love, and Israel should love God with a whole heart. The reason that Israel rebels against God is prosperity. Then people become arrogant and believe that their prosperity derives from their own efforts. But that is not so, and God punishes people who rebel to show them that they depend upon God. When Israel practices idolatry, God punishes them, e.g., through exile, through famine, through drought, and the like. Whether or not Israel knows or likes the fact, it is the fact that Israel therefore has no choice but to accept God's will and fulfill the covenant.

The heaven and the earth respond to the condition of Israel and therefore carry out the stipulations of the covenant. If Israel does not carry out religious duties concerning heaven, then heaven bears witness against them. That centers on the land of Israel in particular. Possession of the land is conditional, not absolute. It begins with grace, not merit. It is defined by the stipulation that Israel observe the covenant, in which case Israel will retain the land. If Israel violates the covenant, Israel will lose the land. When Israel inherits the land, in obedience to the covenant and as an act of grace bestowed by God, it will build the Temple, where Israel's sins will find atonement. The conquest of the land itself is subject to stipulations, just as possession of the land, as an act of God's grace, is marked by religious obligations. If Israel rebels or rejects the Torah, it will lose the land, just as the Canaanites did for their idolatry.

The land is not the only, or the most important, mark of the covenant. The fact that Israel has the Torah shows that Israel stands in a special relationship to God. The Torah is the source of life for Israel. It belongs to everyone, not only the aristocracy. Children should start studying the Torah at the earliest age possible. The study of the Torah is part of the fulfillment of the covenant. Even the most arid details of the Torah contain lessons, and if one studies the Torah, the reward comes both in this world and in the world to come.

The possession of the Torah imposes a particular requirement, involving an action. The most important task of every male Israelite is to study the Torah, which involves memorizing, and not forgetting, each lesson. This must go on every day and all the time. Study of the Torah should be one's main obligation, prior to all others. The correct motive is not for the sake of gain, but for the love of God and the desire for knowledge of God's will. People must direct heart, eyes, ears, to teachings of the Torah. Study of the Torah transforms human relationships, so that strangers become the children of the master of the Torah whom they serve as disciples. However unimportant the teaching or the teacher, all is as if on the authority of Moses at Sinai. When a person departs from the Torah, that person becomes an idolater. Study of the Torah prevents idolatry.

ISRAEL AND THE NATIONS: THE MEANING OF HISTORY: The covenant, through the Torah of Sinai, governs not only the ongoing life of Israel but also the state of human affairs universally. The history of Israel forms a single, continuous, cycle, in that what happened in the beginning prefigures what will happen at the end of time. Events of Genesis are reenacted both in middle-history, between the beginning and the end, and also at the end of times. So the traits of the tribal founders dictated the history

of their families to both the here and now and also the eschatological age. Moses was shown the whole of Israel's history, past, present, future. The times of the patriarchs are reenacted in the messianic day. That shows how Israel's history runs in cycles, so that events of ancient times prefigure events now. The prophets, beginning with Moses, describe those cycles. What happens bears close ties to what is going to happen. The prophetic promises too were realized in Temple times, and will be realized at the end of time.

The periods in the history of Israel, marked by the exodus and wandering, the inheritance of the land and the building of the Temple, the destruction, are all part of a divine plan. In this age Rome rules, but in the age to come, marked by the study of the Torah and the offering of sacrifices in the Temple cult, Israel will be in charge. That is the fundamental pattern and meaning of history. The Holy Spirit makes possible actions that bear consequences only much later in time. The prefiguring of history forms the dominant motif in Israel's contemporary life, and the reenacting of what has already been forms a constant. Israel therefore should believe, if not in what is coming, then in what has already been. The very names of places in the land attest to the continuity of Israel's history, which follows rules that do not change. The main point is that while Israel will be punished in the worst possible way, Israel will not be wiped out.

But the cyclical character of Israel's history should not mislead. Events follow a pattern, but knowledge of that pattern, which is provided by the Torah, permits Israel both to understand and also to affect its own destiny. Specifically, Israel controls its own destiny through its conduct with God. Israel's history is the working out of the effects of Israel's conduct, moderated by the merit of the ancestors. Abraham effected a change in God's relationship to the world. But merit, which makes history, is attained by one's own deeds as well. The effect of merit, in the nation's standing among the other nations, is simple. When Israel enjoys merit, it gives testimony against itself, but when not, then the most despised nation testifies against it.

But God is with Israel in time of trouble. When Israel sins, it suffers. When it repents and is forgiven, it is redeemed. For example, Israel's wandering in the wilderness took place because of the failure of Israel to attain merit. Sin is what causes the wandering in the wilderness. People rebel because they are prosperous. The merit of the ancestors works in history to Israel's benefit. What Israel does not merit on its own, at a given time, the merit of the ancestors may secure in any event. The best way to deal with Israel's powerlessness is through Torah-study; the vigor of engagement with Torah-study compensates for weakness.

It goes without saying that Israel's history follows a set time, e.g., at the fulfillment of a set period of time, an awaited event will take place. The prophets prophesy concerning the coming of the day of the Lord. Accordingly, nothing is haphazard, and all things happen in accord with a plan. That plan encompasses this world, the time of the Messiah, and the world to come, in that order. God will personally exact vengeance at the end of time. God also will raise the dead. Israel has overcome difficult times and can continue to do so. The task ahead is easier than the tasks already accomplished. Israel's punishment is only once, while the punishment coming upon the nations is unremitting. Peace is worthwhile and everyone needs it. Israel's history ends in the world to come or in the days of the Messiah. The righteous inherit the Garden of Eden. The righteous in the age to come will be joyful.

God acts in history and does so publicly, in full light of day. That is to show the nations who is in charge. The Torah is what distinguishes Israel from the nations. All the nations had every opportunity to understand and accept the Torah, and all declined it; that is why Israel was selected. And that demonstrates the importance of both covenant and the Torah, the medium of the covenant. The nations even had a prophet, comparable to Moses, who was Balaam. The nations have no important role in history, except as God assigns them

a role in relationship to Israel's conduct. The nations are estranged from God by idolatry. That is what prevents goodness from coming into the world. The name of God rests upon Israel in greatest measure. Idolaters do not control heaven. The greatest sin an Israelite can commit is idolatry, and those who entice Israel to idolatry are deprived of the ordinary protections of the law. God is violently angry at the nations because of idolatry. As to the nations' relationships with Israel, they are guided by Israel's condition. When Israel is weak, the nations take advantage, when strong, they are sycophantic. God did not apportion love to the nations of the world as he did to Israel.

Israel at Home: The Community and its Governance: A mark of God's favor is that Israel has (or, has had and will have) a government of its own. Part of the covenantal relationship requires Israel to follow leaders whom God has chosen and instructed, such as Moses and the prophets. Accordingly, Israel is to establish a government and follow sound public policy. Its leaders are chosen by God. Israel's leaders, e.g., prophets, are God's servants, and that is a mark of the praise that is owing to them. They are to be in the model of Moses, humble, choice, select, well-known. Moses was the right one to bestow a blessing, Israel were the right ones to receive the blessing.

Yet all leaders are mortal, even Moses died. The saints are leaders ready to give their lives for Israel. The greatest of them enjoy exceptionally long life. But the sins of the people are blamed on their leaders. The leaders depend on the people to keep the Torah, and Moses thanked them in advance for keeping the Torah after he died. The leaders were to be patient, honest, give a full hearing to all sides, make just decisions, in a broad range of matters. To stand before the judge is to stand before God. God makes sure that Israel does not lack for leadership. The basic task of the leader is both to rebuke and also to console the people.

The rulers of Israel are servants of God. The prophets exemplify these leaders, in the model of Moses, and Israel's rulers act only on the instruction of prophets. Their authority rests solely on God's favor and grace. At the instance of God, the leaders of Israel speak, in particular, words of admonition. These are delivered before death, when the whole picture is clear, so that people can draw the necessary conclusions. These words, when Moses spoke them, covered the entire history of the community of Israel. The leaders of Israel address admonition to the entire community at once. No one is excepted. But the Israelites can deal with the admonition. They draw the correct conclusions. Repentance overcomes sin, as at the sin of the golden calf. The Israelites were contentious, nitpickers, litigious, and, in general, gave Moses a difficult time. Their descendants should learn not to do so. Israel should remain united and obedient to its leaders. The task of the community is to remain united. When the Israelites are of one opinion below, God's name is glorified above.

General Considerations: Midrash Defined

The word *midrash*, translated "exegesis," presents confusion, since it is routinely used to convey three distinct, if related, meanings. If people say "the *midrash* says," they may refer to

> [1] a distinctive *process* of interpretation ofa particular text, thus, the hermeneutic,
> [2] a particular compilation of the results of that process, thus, a book that is the composite of a set of exegeses, or
> [3] a concrete unit of the working of that process of scriptural exegesis, thus the write-up of the process of interpretation as it applies to a single verse, the exegetical composition on a particular verse (or group of verses).

It follows that for clear speech the word *midrash*, standing by itself, bears no meaning. Let us consider the three distinct usages.

[1] The word *midrash* refers to the processes of scriptural exegesis carried on by diverse groups of Jews from the time of ancient Israel to nearly the present day. Thus people say, "He produced a *midrash* on the verse," meaning, "an exegesis." A

more extreme usage produces, "Life is a *midrash* on Scripture," meaning that what happens in the everyday world imparts meaning or significance to biblical stories and admonitions. It is difficult to specify what the word *midrash* in Hebrew expresses that the word *exegesis* in English does not. It follows that just how "exegesis" in English differs from *midrash* in Hebrew is not self-evident. Nor is there any reason that the Hebrew will serve better than the more familiar English.

[2] The word *midrash* further stands for a compilation of scriptural exegeses, as in "that *midrash* deals with the book of Joshua." In that sentence, *midrash* refers to a compilation of exegeses, hence the statement means, "That compilation of exegeses deals with the book of Joshua." *Compilation* or composite in the present context clearly serves more accurately to convey meaning than *midrash.* That is why in this Introduction we speak of Midrash-compilation, as in "the Midrash-compilation on Exodus. . . ."

[3] The word *midrash*, finally, stands for the written-out result of a process of scriptural exegesis, that is to say, a composition (e.g., a paragraph with a beginning, middle, and end, in which a completed thought is laid forth), resulting from the process of *midrash.* In this setting *a midrash* refers to a paragraph or a unit of exegetical exposition, in which a verse of the Hebrew Scriptures is subjected to some form of exegesis or other. In this usage one may say, "Let me now cite the *midrash*," meaning, a particular passage of exegesis, a paragraph or other completed whole unit of exegetical thought, a composition that provides an exegesis of a particular verse. We use the word composition in this sense, that is, Midrash-composition, the particular presentation of a given passage.

Types of Midrash-Compilations

The relationship to Scripture and modes of use of verses of Scripture yield a classification of Midrash-compilations. In the Midrash-compilations of Rabbinic literature, verses of Scripture serve not merely to prove but to instruct. Israelite Scripture constituted not merely a source of validation but a powerful instrument of profound inquiry. The framers of the various Midrash-compilations set forth propositions of their own, yet in dialogue with Scripture. Scripture raised questions, set forth premises of discourse and argument, supplied facts, constituted that faithful record of the facts, rules, and meaning of humanity's, and Israel's, history that, for natural philosophy, derived from the facts of physics or astronomy.

Whether or not their statement accorded with the position of Scripture on a given point, merely said the simple and obvious sense of Scripture, found ample support in proof texts—none of these considerations bears material consequence. These authorships made use of Scripture, but they did so by making selections, shaping a distinctive idiom of discourse in so doing. True, verses of Scripture provided facts; they supplied proofs of propositions much as data of natural science proved propositions of natural philosophy. Writing with Scripture meant appealing to the facts that Scripture provided to prove propositions that the authorships at hand wished to prove, forming with Scripture the systems these writers proposed to construct.

Classifications of relationships to Scripture are three.

[1] The first approach shows that a verse of the Israelite Scriptures illustrates a theme, that is to say, provides *information* on a given subject. In the context of the statement of a document, that information is systemically inert. That is markedly characteristic of Mekhilta According to R. Ishmael. The first mode of relationship therefore is to develop an anthology on a theme. One way of forming a comprehensible statement is to draw together information on a single theme. The theme then imposes cogency on facts, which are deemed to illuminate aspects of that theme. Such a statement constitutes a topical anthology. The materials in the anthology do not, all together, add up to a statement that transcends detail. For example, they do not point toward a conclusion beyond themselves. They rather comprise a series of facts, e.g., fact 1, fact 2, fact 3. But put together, these three facts do not yield yet another one, nor do they point toward a

proposition beyond themselves. They generate no generalization, prove no point, propose no proposition.

[2] A second mode of relationship will tell us that a verse of the Israelite Scriptures defines a *problem* on its own, in its own determinate limits and terms. In the setting of a document, the problem will be identified and addressed because it is systemically active. That is not at all common in Mekhilta Attributed to R. Ishmael, while Sifra for its part takes a keen interest in verses and their meanings. Yet in doing so, its authorship weaves a filigree of holy words over a polished surface of very hard wood: a wood of its own hewing and shaping and polishing.

[3] Yet a third mode points toward that utilization of Israelite Scriptures in the formation and expression of *an independent proposition*, one autonomous of the theme or even the facts contained within—proved by—those Scriptures. This characterizes the relationship between Scripture and Sifra, which is not extra-scriptural but meta-scriptural. Scripture in this function is systemically essential yet monumentally irrelevant. Sifra in that way addresses and disposes of Scripture by rewriting it in ways of Sifra's authorship's design. That is the wonder of this marvelous writing: its courage, its brilliance, its originality, above all, its stubbornness.

The routine relationship to Scripture is indicated when the focus of interest is on the exegesis of Scripture. In Mekhilta Attributed to R. Ishmael, as well as in Sifra and Sifré to Deuteronomy, we have composites of materials that find cogency solely in the words of a given verse of Scripture but in no other way. These materials string together, upon the necklace of words or phrases of a verse, diverse comments; the comments do not fit together or point to any broader conclusion; they do not address a single theme or form an anthology. Cogency derives from the (external) verse that is cited; intelligibility begins—and ends—in that verse and is accomplished by the amplification of the verse's contents. Without the verse, the words that follow form gibberish. But reading the words as amplifications of a sense contained within the cited verse, we can make good sense of them.

Jacob Neusner

Rabbinic Judaism, Formative Canon of, IV: The Aggadic Documents. Midrash: The Later Compilations

While Mekhilta Attributed to R. Ishmael, Sifra, and Sifre to Numbers, like the Mishnah, cover many topics and yield no prominent propositional program but only implicit principles of thought, the second and later set of Midrash-compilations, produced in the fifth and sixth centuries (ca. 450–600 c.e.), which accompany the Talmud of the Land of Israel, form highly propositional statements. The first of the group, Genesis Rabbah, makes the same point many times and sets forth a coherent and original account of the book of Genesis. The next set, Leviticus Rabbah, Pesiqta deRab Kahana, and Pesiqta Rabbati, provide well-argued syllogistic arguments, entirely leaving behind the structure of verse-by-verse exposition. Let us examine each document in turn.

Genesis Rabbah

Generally thought to have been closed ("redacted") at ca. 400–450 c.e., sometime after the Talmud of the Land of Israel had been redacted, Genesis Rabbah transforms the book of Genesis from a genealogy and family history of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, then Joseph, into a book of the laws of history and rules of the salvation of Israel: the deeds of the founders become omens and signs for the final generations. In Genesis Rabbah, thus, the entire narrative of Genesis is so formed as to point toward the sacred history

of Israel, the Jewish people: its slavery and redemption; its coming Temple in Jerusalem; its exile and salvation at the end of time—the whole a paradigm of exile and return. In the rereading by the authorship of Genesis Rabbah, Genesis proclaims the prophetic message that the world's creation commenced a single, straight line of significant events, that is to say, history, leading in the end to the salvation of Israel and, through Israel, of all humanity. The single most important proposition of Genesis Rabbah is that, in the story of the beginnings of creation, humanity, and Israel, we find the message of the meaning and end of the life of the Jewish people in the here and now of the fifth century. The deeds of the founders supply signals for the children about what is going to come in the future. So the biography of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob also constitutes a protracted account of the history of Israel later on.

Genesis Rabbah is a composite document. As with the Talmud that it accompanies, so in Genesis Rabbah, some of the material in the compilation can be shown to have been put together before that material was used for the purposes of the compilers. Many times a comment entirely apposite to a verse of Genesis has been joined to a set of comments in no way pertinent to the verse at hand. Proof for a given syllogism, furthermore, will derive from a verse of Genesis as well as from numerous verses of other books of the Bible. Such a syllogistic argument therefore has not been written for exegetical purposes particular to the verse at hand. On the contrary, the particular verse subject to attention serves that other, propositional plan; it is not the focus of discourse; it has not generated the comment but merely provided a proof for a syllogism. That is what it means to say that a proposition yields an exegesis. That fundamental proposition, displayed throughout Genesis Rabbah, which yields the specific exegeses of many of the verses of the book of Genesis and even whole stories, is that the beginnings point toward the endings, and the meaning of Israel's past points toward the message that lies in Israel's future. The things that happened to the fathers and mothers of the family, Israel, provide a sign for the things that will happen to the children later on.

What is at stake is the discovery, among the facts provided by the written Torah, of the social rules that govern Israel's history. At stake is the search for the order yielded by the chaos of uninterpreted data. It follows that, as with the Mishnah, the governing mode of thought is that of natural philosophy. It involves the classification of data by shared traits, yielding descriptive rules, the testing of propositions against the facts of data, the whole aimed at the discovery of underlying rules out of a multiplicity of details, in all, the proposing and testing, against the facts provided by Scripture, of the theses of Israel's salvation that demanded attention just then. But the issues were not so much philosophical as religious, in the sense that while philosophy addressed questions of nature and rules of enduring existence, religion asked about issues of history and God's intervention in time. Within that rough and ready distinction between nature, supernature, and sanctification, typified by the Mishnah and the Tosefta and the legal enterprise in general, on the one side, and society, history, and salvation, typified by Genesis Rabbah, Leviticus Rabbah, Pesiqta deRab Kahana, and the theological inquiry into teleology, on the other, we may distinguish our documents.

Specifically, we may classify the document before us and its successors and companions as works of profound theological inquiry into God's rules for history and society in the here and now and for salvation at the end of historical time. That fundamental proposition concerning the search, in the account of the beginnings, of the ending and meaning of Israel's society and history—hence the rules that govern and permit knowledge of what is to come—constitutes the generative proposition that yielded the specific exegesis of the book of Genesis in Genesis Rabbah.

Genesis Rabbah in its final form emerges from that momentous century in which the Roman Empire passed from pagan to Christian rule, and, in which, in the aftermath of Julian's abortive reversion to paganism,

in ca. 360, which endangered the Christian character of the Roman empire, Christianity adopted that politics of repression of paganism that rapidly engulfed Judaism as well. The issue confronting Israel in the Land of Israel therefore proved immediate: the meaning of the new and ominous turn of history, the implications of Christ's worldly triumph for the other-worldly and supernatural people, Israel, whom God chooses and loves. The message of the exegete-compositors addressed the circumstance of historical crisis and generated remarkable renewal, a rebirth of intellect in the encounter with Scripture, now in quest of the rules not of sanctification—these had already been found—but of salvation. So the book of Genesis, which portrays how all things had begun, would testify to the message and the method of the end: the coming salvation of patient, hopeful, enduring Israel.

That is why in the categories of philosophy, including science and society, and religion, including a prophetic interpretation of history and teleology, Genesis Rabbah presents a deeply *religious* view of Israel's historical and salvific life, in much the same way that the Mishnah provides a profoundly *philosophical* view of Israel's everyday and sanctified existence. Just as the main themes of the Mishnah evoke the consideration of issues of being and becoming, the potential and the actual, mixtures and blends and other problems of physics, all in the interest of philosophical analysis, so Genesis Rabbah presents its cogent and coherent agendum as well. That program of inquiry concerns the way in which, in the book of Genesis, God set forth to Moses the entire scope and meaning of Israel's history among the nations and salvation at the end of days. The mode of thought by which the framers of Genesis Rabbah work out their propositions dictates the character of their exegesis, as to rhetoric, logical principle of cogent and intelligible discourse, and, as is clear, even as to topic.

Sages read Genesis as the history of the world with emphasis on Israel. So the lives portrayed, the domestic quarrels and petty conflicts with the neighbors, all serve to yield insight into what was to be. Why so? Because the deeds of the patriarchs taught lessons on how the children were to act, and, it further followed, the lives of the patriarchs signaled the history of Israel. Israel constituted one extended family, and the metaphor of the family, serving the nation as it did, imparted to the stories of Genesis the character of a family record. History become genealogy conveyed the message of salvation. These propositions really laid down the same judgment, one for the individual and the family, the other for the community and the nation, since there was no differentiating one from the other. Every detail of the narrative therefore served to prefigure what was to be, and Israel found itself, time and again, in the revealed facts of the history of the creation of the world, the decline of humanity down to the time of Noah, and, finally, its ascent to Abraham, Isaac, and Israel.

In Genesis Rabbah the entire narrative of Genesis is so formed as to point toward the sacred history of Israel, the Jewish people: its slavery and redemption; its coming Temple in Jerusalem; its exile and salvation at the end of time. The powerful message of Genesis in Genesis Rabbah proclaims that the world's creation commenced a single, straight line of events, leading in the end to the salvation of Israel and through Israel all humanity. Israel's history constitutes the counterpart of creation, and the laws of Israel's salvation form the foundation of creation. Therefore a given story out of Genesis, about creation, events from Adam to Noah and Noah to Abraham, the domestic affairs of the patriarchs, or Joseph, will bear a deeper message about what it means to be Israel, on the one side, and what in the end of days will happen to Israel, on the other. So the persistent theological program requires sages' to search in Scripture for meaning for their own circumstance and for the condition of their people. The single most important proposition of Genesis Rabbah is that, in the story of the beginnings of creation, humanity, and Israel, we find the message of the meaning and end of the life of the Jewish people. The deeds of the founders supply signals for the children about what is going to come

in the future. So the biography of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob also constitutes a protracted account of the history of Israel later on. If the sages could announce a single syllogism and argue it systematically, that is the proposition upon which they would insist.

As a corollary to the view that the biography of the fathers prefigures the history of the descendants, sages maintained that the deeds of the children—the holy way of life of Israel—follow the model established by the founders long ago. So they looked in Genesis for the basis for the things they held to be God's will for Israel. And they found ample proof. Sages invariably searched the stories of Genesis for evidence of the origins not only of creation and of Israel, but also of Israel's cosmic way of life, its understanding of how, in the passage of nature and the seasons, humanity worked out its relationship with God. The holy way of life that Israel lived through the seasons of nature therefore would make its mark upon the stories of the creation of the world and the beginning of Israel.

Part of the reason sages pursued the interest at hand derived from polemic. From the first Christian century theologians of Christianity maintained that salvation did not depend upon keeping the laws of the Torah. Abraham, after all, had been justified and he did not keep the Torah, which, in his day, had not yet been given. So sages time and again would maintain that Abraham indeed kept the entire Torah even before it had been revealed. They further attributed to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob rules of the Torah enunciated only later on, for example, the institution of prayer three times a day.

The world was created for Israel, and not for the nations of the world. At the end of days everyone will see what only Israel now knows. Since sages read Genesis as the history of the world with emphasis on Israel, the lives portrayed, the domestic quarrels and petty conflicts with the neighbors, as much as the story of creation itself, all serve to yield insight into what was to be. The lives of the patriarchs signaled the history of Israel. Every detail of the narrative therefore served to prefigure what was to be, and Israel found itself, time and again, in the revealed facts of the history of the creation of the world, the decline of humanity down to the time of Noah, and, finally, its ascent to Abraham, Isaac, and Israel. In order to illustrate the single approach to diverse stories, whether concerning Creation, Adam, and Noah, or concerning Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, we focus on two matters: Abraham, on the one side, and Rome, on the other. In the former we see that Abraham serves as well as Adam to prove the point of it all. In the latter we observe how, in reading Genesis, the sages who compiled Genesis Rabbah discovered the meaning of the events of their own day.

Genesis is read as if it portrayed the history of Israel and Rome. For that is the single obsession binding sages of the document at hand to common discourse with the text before them. Why Rome in the form it takes in Genesis Rabbah? And how come the obsessive character of the sages' disposition of the theme of Rome? Were their picture merely of Rome as tyrant and destroyer of the Temple, we should have no reason to link the text to the problems of the age of redaction and closure. But now it is Rome as Israel's brother, counterpart, and nemesis, Rome as the one thing standing in the way of Israel's, and the world's, ultimate salvation. So the stakes are different, and much higher. It is not a political Rome but a Christian and messianic Rome that is at issue: Rome as surrogate for Israel, Rome as obstacle to Israel. Why? It is because Rome now confronts Israel with a crisis, and the program of Genesis Rabbah constitutes a response to that crisis. Rome in the fourth century became Christian. Sages respond by facing that fact quite squarely, saying, "Indeed, it is as you say, a kind of Israel, an heir of Abraham as your texts explicitly claim. But we remain the sole legitimate Israel, the bearer of the birthright—we and not you. So you are our brother: Esau, Ishmael, Edom."

By rereading the story of the beginnings, sages discovered the answer and the secret of the end. Rome claimed to be Israel, and, indeed, sages conceded, Rome shared the patrimony of Israel. That claim took the form of the Christians' appropriate of the Torah as "the Old Testament," so sages

acknowledged a simple fact in acceding to the notion that, in some way, Rome too formed part of Israel. But it was the rejected part, the Ishmael, the Esau, not the Isaac, not the Jacob. The advent of Christian Rome precipitated the sustained, polemical, and rigorous and well-argued rereading of beginnings in light of the end. Rome then marked the conclusion of human history as Israel had known it. Beyond? The coming of the true Messiah, the redemption of Israel, the salvation of the world, the end of time. So the issues were not inconsiderable, and when the sages spoke of Esau/Rome, as they did so often, they confronted the life-or-death decision of the day.

Leviticus Rabbah

When we come to Leviticus Rabbah, we find the interest in verse succeeding verse has waned, while the proposition comes to the fore as the dominant organizing motif throughout. With Genesis Rabbah, the Sifra's and Sifré's mode of exegesis of verses and their components, one by one in sequence, comes to its conclusion and a new approach commences. The mixed character of Genesis Rabbah, joining propositional to exegetical rhetoric in order to make points of both general intelligibility and also very specific and concrete amplification of detail, marks a transitional moment in the workings of Midrash. Exactly what did the framers of Leviticus Rabbah learn when they opened the book of Leviticus? To state the answer in advance, when they read the rules of sanctification of the priesthood, they heard the message of the salvation of all Israel. Leviticus became the story of how Israel, purified from social sin and sanctified, would be saved.

The framers of Leviticus Rabbah, closed in the mid-fifth century, set forth, in the thirty-seven *parashiyyot* or chapters into which their document is divided, thirty-seven well-crafted propositions. They made no pretense at a systematic exegesis of sequences of verses of Scripture, abandoning the verse by verse mode of organizing discourse. They struck out on their own to compose a means of expressing their propositions in a more systematic and cogent way. Each of the thirty-seven chapters proves cogent, and all of them spell out their respective statements in an intellectually economical, if rich, manner. Each *parashah* makes its own point, but all of them furthermore form a single statement.

The message of Leviticus Rabbah—congruent with that of Genesis Rabbah—is that the laws of history may be known, and that these laws, so far as Israel is concerned, focus upon the holy life of the community. If Israel obeys the laws of society aimed at Israel's sanctification, then the foreordained history, resting on the merit of the ancestors, will unfold as Israel hopes. So there is no secret to the meaning of the events of the day, and Israel, for its part, can affect its destiny and effect salvation. The authorship of Leviticus Rabbah has thus joined the two great motifs, sanctification and salvation, by reading a biblical book, Leviticus, that is devoted to the former in the light of the requirements of the latter. In this way they made their fundamental point, which is that salvation at the end of history depends upon sanctification in the here and now.

To prove these points, the authors of the compositions make lists of facts that bear the same traits and show the working of rules of history. It follows that the mode of thought brought to bear upon the theme of history remains exactly the same as in the Mishnah: list-making, with data exhibiting similar taxonomic traits drawn together into lists based on common monothetic traits or definitions. These lists through the power of repetition make a single enormous point or prove a social law of history. The catalogues of exemplary heroes and historical events serve a further purpose. They provide a model of how contemporary events are to be absorbed into the biblical paradigm. Since biblical events exemplify recurrent happenings, sin and redemption, forgiveness and atonement, they lose their one-time character. At the same time and in the same way, current events find a place within the ancient, but eternally present, paradigmatic scheme. So no new historical events, other than exemplary episodes in lives of heroes, demand narration because, through what is said about the past, what was happening

in the times of the framers of Leviticus Rabbah would also come under consideration.

This mode of dealing with biblical history and contemporary events produces two reciprocal effects. The first is the mythicization of biblical stories, their removal from the framework of ongoing, unique patterns of history and sequences of events and their transformation into accounts of things that happen all the time. The second is that contemporary events too lose all of their specificity and enter the paradigmatic framework of established mythic existence. So (1) the Scripture's myth happens every day, and (2) every day produces re-enactment of the Scripture's myth.

The focus of Leviticus Rabbah's laws of history is upon the society of Israel, its national fate and moral condition. Indeed, nearly all of the *parashiyyot* of Leviticus Rabbah turn out to deal with the national, social condition of Israel, and this in three contexts: (1) Israel's setting in the history of the nations, (2) the sanctified character of the inner life of Israel itself, (3) the future, salvific history of Israel. So the biblical book that deals with the tabernacle in the wilderness, which sages understood to form the model for the holy Temple later on built in Jerusalem, now is shown to address the holy people. That is no paradox, rather a logical next step in the exploration of sanctification. Leviticus really discusses not the consecration of the cult but the sanctification of the nation—its conformity to God's will laid forth in the Torah, and God's rules. Leviticus Rabbah executes the paradox of shifting categories, applying to the nation—not a locative category—and its history the category that in the book subject to commentary pertained to the holy place—a locative category—and its eternal condition. The nation now is like the cult then, the ordinary Israelite now like the priest then. The holy way of life lived now, through acts to which merit accrues, corresponds to the holy rites then. The process of metamorphosis is full, rich, complete. When everything stands for something else, the something else repeatedly turns out to be the nation. This is what our document spells out in exquisite detail, yet never missing the main point.

The message of Leviticus Rabbah paradoxically attaches itself to the book of Leviticus, as if that book had come from prophecy and addressed the issue of salvation. But it came from the priesthood and spoke of sanctification. The paradoxical syllogism—the as-if reading, the opposite of how things seem—of the composers of Leviticus Rabbah therefore reaches simple formulation. In the very setting of sanctification the authors find the promise of salvation. In the topics of the cult and the priesthood they uncover the national and social issues of the moral life and redemptive hope of Israel. The repeated comparison and contrast of priesthood and prophecy, sanctification and salvation, turn out to produce a complement, which comes to most perfect union in the text at hand.

What we have in Leviticus Rabbah is the result of the mode of thought not of prophets or historians, but of philosophers and scientists. The framers propose not to lay down, but to discover, rules governing Israel's life. As we find the rules of nature by identifying and classifying facts of natural life, so we find rules of society by identifying and classifying the facts of Israel's social life. In both modes of inquiry we make sense of things by bringing together like specimens and finding out whether they form a species, then bringing together like species and finding out whether they form a genus—in all, classifying data and identifying the rules that make possible the classification. That sort of thinking lies at the deepest level of list-making, which is work of offering a proposition and facts (for social rules) as much as a genus and its species (for rules of nature). Once discovered, the social rules of Israel's national life yield explicit statements, such as that God hates the arrogant and loves the humble. The logical status of these statements, in context, is as secure and unassailable as the logical status of statements about physics, ethics, or politics, as these emerge in philosophical thought. What differentiates the statements is not their logical status—as sound, scientific philosophy—but only their subject matter, on the one

side, and distinctive rhetoric, on the other.

From Commentary to Propositional Statements: The framers of Leviticus Rabbah treat topics, not particular verses. They make generalizations that are freestanding. They express cogent propositions through extended compositions, not episodic ideas. In Genesis Rabbah things people wished to say were attached to predefined statements based on an existing text, constructed in accord with an organizing logic independent of the systematic expression of a single, well-framed idea. That is to say, the sequence of verses of Genesis and their contents played a massive role in the larger-scale organization of Genesis Rabbah and expression of its propositions. Now the authors of Leviticus Rabbah so collected and arranged their materials that an abstract proposition emerges. That proposition is not expressed only or mainly through episodic restatements, assigned to an order established by a base text (whether Genesis or Leviticus, or a Mishnah-tractate, for that matter). Rather it emerges through a logic of its own.

What is new is the move from an essentially exegetical mode of logical discourse to a fundamentally philosophical one. It is the shift from discourse framed around an established (hence old) text to syllogistic argument organized around a proposed (hence new) theorem or proposition. What changes, therefore, is the way in which cogent thought takes place, as people moved from discourse contingent on some prior principle of organization to discourse autonomous of a ready-made program inherited from an earlier paradigm. When they read the rules of sanctification of the priesthood, the sages responsible for Leviticus Rabbah heard the message of the salvation of all Israel. Leviticus became the story of how Israel, purified from social sin and sanctified, would be saved.

The authors of Leviticus Rabbah express their ideas, first, by selecting materials already written for other purposes and using them for their own, second, by composing materials, and third, by arranging both in parashiyyot into an order through which propositions may reach expression. This involves both the modes of thought, and the topical program, and also the unifying proposition of the document as a whole. To summarize:

[1] The principal mode of thought required one thing to be read in terms of another, one verse in light of a different verse (or topic, theme, symbol, idea), one situation in light of another.
[2] The principal subject of thought is the moral condition of Israel, on the one side, and the salvation of Israel, on the other.
[3] The single unifying proposition—the syllogism at the document's deepest structure—is that Israel's salvation depends upon its moral condition.

It follows that Leviticus Rabbah constitutes not merely diverse thoughts but a single, sustained composition. The authors do so through a rich tapestry of unstated propositions that are only illustrated, delineated at the outset, by the statement of some propositions. And these also are illustrated. It is, in a word, a syllogism by example—that is, by repeated appeal to facts—rather than by argument alone. For in context, an example constitutes a fact. The source of many examples or facts is Scripture, the foundation of all reality. Accordingly, in the context of Israelite life and culture, in which Scripture recorded facts, we have a severely logical, because entirely factual, statement of how rightly organized and classified facts sustain a proposition. In context that proposition is presented as rigorously and critically as the social rules of discourse allowed.

The authors of the document's compositions and composites transformed Scriptural history from a sequence of one-time events, leading from one place to some other, into an ever-present mythic world. No longer does Scripture speak of only one Moses, one David, one set of happenings of a distinctive and never-to-be-repeated character. Now whatever happens of which the thinkers propose to take account must enter and be absorbed into that established and ubiquitous pattern and structure founded in Scripture. It is not that biblical history repeats itself. Rather, biblical history no longer constitutes history at all, that is, history as a linear, purposeful, continuous story of things that happened once, long ago, and pointed to some one moment in the future. Rather it becomes an account of things that happen

every day—hence, an ever-present mythic world. In this way the basic trait of history in the salvific framework, its one-timeness and linearity, is reworked into the generative quality of sanctification, its routine and everyday, ongoing reality. When history enters a paradigm, it forms an exercise within philosophy, the search for the rules and regularities of the world. That is the profound achievement of the document before us.

And that is why, in Leviticus Rabbah, Scripture—the book of Leviticus—as a whole does not dictate the order of discourse, let alone its character. In this document the authorship at hand chose in Leviticus itself an isolated verse here, an odd phrase there. These then presented the pretext for propositional discourse commonly quite out of phase with the cited passage. The verses that are quoted ordinarily shift from the meanings they convey to the implications they contain, speaking about something, anything, other than what they seem to be saying. So the *as-if* frame of mind brought to Scripture precipitates renewal of Scripture, requiring the seeing of everything with fresh eyes. And the result of the new vision was a re-imagining of the social world envisioned by the document at hand, the everyday world of Israel in its Land in that same difficult time at which Genesis Rabbah was taking shape, sometime in the fifth century and the first century after the conversion of Constantine and the beginning of the Christian chapter of Western civilization. For what the sages now proposed was a reconstruction of existence along the lines of the ancient design of Scripture as they read it. What that meant was that, from a sequence of one-time and linear events, everything that happened was turned into a repetition of known and already experienced paradigms, hence, once more, a mythic being. The source and core of the myth derive from Scripture—Scripture reread, renewed, reconstructed along with the society that revered Scripture.

The recurrent message of the document may be stated in brief way. God loves Israel, so gave them the Torah, which defines their life and governs their welfare. Israel is alone in its category (*sui generis*), so what is a virtue to Israel is a vice to the nations, life-giving to Israel, poison to the gentiles. True, Israel sins, but God forgives that sin, having punished the nation on account of it. Such a process has yet to come to an end, but it will culminate in Israel's complete regeneration. Meanwhile, Israel's assurance of God's love lies in the many expressions of special concern, for even the humblest and most ordinary aspects of the national life: the food the nation eats, the sexual practices by which it procreates. These life-sustaining, life-transmitting activities draw God's special interest, as a mark of his general love for Israel. Israel then is supposed to achieve its life in conformity with the marks of God's love.

These indications moreover signify also the character of Israel's difficulty, namely, subordination to the nations in general, but to the fourth kingdom, Rome, in particular. Both food laws and skin diseases stand for the nations. There is yet another category of sin, also collective and generative of collective punishment, and that is social. The moral character of Israel's life, the treatment of people by one another, the practice of gossip and small-scale thuggery—these too draw down divine penalty. The nation's fate therefore corresponds to its moral condition. The moral condition, however, emerges not only from the current generation. Israel's richest hope lies in the merit of the ancestors, thus in the Scriptural record of the merits attained by the founders of the nation, those who originally brought it into being and gave it life.

The world to come will right all presently unbalanced relationships. What is good will go forward, what is bad will come to an end. The simple message is that the things people revere, the cult and its majestic course through the year, will go on; Jerusalem will come back, so too the Temple, in all their glory. Israel will be saved through the merit of the ancestors, atonement, study of Torah, practice of religious duties. The prevalence of the eschatological dimension in the formal structures, with its messianic and other expressions, here finds its counterpart in the repetition of the same few symbols in the expression of doctrine.

The theme of the moral life of Israel produces propositions concerning not only the

individual but, more important, the social virtues that the community as a whole must exhibit. First of all, the message to the individual constitutes a revision, for this context, of the address to the nation: humility as against arrogance, obedience as against sin, constant concern not to follow one's natural inclination to do evil or to overcome the natural limitations of the human condition. Israel must accept its fate, obey and rely on the merits accrued through the ages and God's special love. The individual must conform, in ordinary affairs, to this same paradigm of patience and submission. Great men and women, that is, individual heroes within the established paradigm, conform to that same pattern, exemplifying the national virtues. Among these, Moses stands out; he has no equal. The special position of the humble Moses is complemented by the patriarchs and by David, all of whom knew how to please God and left as an inheritance to Israel the merit they had thereby attained.

If we now ask about further recurring themes or topics, there is one so commonplace that we should have to list the majority of paragraphs of discourse in order to provide a complete list. It is the list of events in Israel's history, meaning, in this context, Israel's history solely in scriptural times, down through the return to Zion. The one-time events of the generation of the flood, Sodom and Gomorrah, the patriarchs and the sojourn in Egypt, the exodus, the revelation of the Torah at Sinai, the golden calf, the Davidic monarchy and the building of the Temple, Sennacherib, Hezekiah, and the destruction of northern Israel, Nebuchadnezzar and the destruction of the Temple in 586, the life of Israel in Babylonian captivity, Daniel and his associates, Mordecai and Haman—these events occur over and over again. They turn out to serve as paradigms of sin and atonement, steadfastness and divine intervention, and equivalent lessons.

We find, in fact, a fairly standard repertoire of scriptural heroes or villains, on the one side, and conventional lists of Israel's enemies and their actions and downfall, on the other. The boastful, for instance, include the generation of the flood, Sodom and Gomorrah, Pharaoh, Sisera, Sennacherib, Nebuchadnezzar, the wicked empire (Rome)—contrasted to Israel, "despised and humble in this world." The four kingdoms recur again and again, always ending, with Rome, with the repeated message that after Rome will come Israel. But Israel has to make this happen through its faith and submission to God's will. Lists of enemies ring the changes on Cain, the Sodomites, Pharaoh, Sennacherib, Nebuchadnezzar, Haman.

At the center of the pretense, that is, the as-if mentality of Leviticus Rabbah and its framers, we find a simple proposition. Israel is God's special love. That love is shown in a simple way. Israel's present condition of subordination derives from its own deeds. It follows that God cares, so Israel may look forward to redemption on God's part in response to Israel's own regeneration through repentance. When the exegetes proceeded to open the scroll of Leviticus, they found numerous occasions to state that proposition in concrete terms and specific contexts. The sinner brings on his own sickness. But God heals through that very ailment. The nations of the world govern in heavy succession, but Israel's lack of faith guaranteed their rule and Israel's moment of renewal will end gentile rule. Israel's leaders—priests, prophets, kings—fall into an entirely different category from those of the nations, as much as does Israel. In these and other concrete allegations, the same classical message comes forth. Israel's sorry condition in no way testifies to Israel's true worth—the grandest pretense of all. All of the little evasions of the primary sense in favor of some other testify to this, the great denial that what is, is what counts. Leviticus Rabbah makes that statement with art and imagination. But it is never subtle about saying so.

Salvation and sanctification join together in Leviticus Rabbah. The laws of the book of Leviticus, focused as they are on the sanctification of the nation through its cult, in Leviticus Rabbah indicate the rules of salvation as well. The message of Leviticus Rabbah attaches itself to the book of Leviticus, as if that book had come from prophecy and addressed the issue of the meaning of history and Israel's salvation. But the book

of Leviticus came from the priesthood and spoke of sanctification. The paradoxical syllogism—the as-if reading, the opposite of how things seem—of the composers of Leviticus Rabbah therefore reaches simple formulation. In the very setting of sanctification we find the promise of salvation. In the topics of the cult and the priesthood we uncover the national and social issues of the moral life and redemptive hope of Israel. The repeated comparison and contrast of priesthood and prophecy, sanctification and salvation, turn out to produce a complement, which comes to most perfect union in the text at hand.

Pesiqta deRab Kahana

A compilation of twenty-eight propositional discourses, Pesiqta deRab Kahana (pisqa yields "chapter," so the plural can be rendered, "chapters attributed to R. Kahana), innovates because it appeals for its themes and lections to the liturgical calendar, rather than to a Pentateuchal book. Pesiqta deRab Kahana marks a stunning innovation in Midrash-compilation because it abandons the pretense that fixed associative connections derive solely from Scripture. Rather, the document follows the synagogal lections. The text that governs the organization of Pesiqta deRab Kahana comprises a liturgical occasion of the synagogue, which is identical to a holy day. This occasion has told our authorship what topic it wishes to take up—and therefore also what verses of Scripture (if any) prove suitable to that topic and its exposition.

Adar-Nisan-Sivan:	Passover-Pentecost: *Pisqaot* 2–12 [possible exception: *Pisqa* 6]
Tammuz-Ab-Elul:	The Ninth of Ab: *Pisqaot* 13–22
Tishré:	Tishré 1–22: *Pisqaot* 23–28

Only *Pisqa* 1 (possibly also *Pisqa* 6) falls out of synchronic relationship with a long sequence of special occasions in the synagogal lections. The twenty-eight parashiyyot of Pesiqta deRab Kahana in order follow the synagogal lections from early spring through fall, in the Western calendar, from late February or early March through late September or early October, approximately half of the solar year, 27 weeks, and somewhat more than half of the lunar year. On the very surface, the basic building block is the theme of a given lectionary Sabbath—that is, a Sabbath distinguished by a particular lection—and not the theme dictated by a given passage of Scripture, let alone the exposition of the language or proposition of such a scriptural verse. The topical program of the document may be defined very simply: expositions of themes dictated by special Sabbaths or festivals and their lections.

This catalogue draws our attention to three eccentric *pisqaot*, distinguished by their failure to build discourse upon the base verse. These are No. 4, which may fairly claim that its topic, the red cow, occurs in exact verbal formulation in the verses at hand; No. 23, the New Year, and No. 25, *Selihot*. The last-named may or may not take an integral place in the structure of the whole. But the middle item, the New Year, on the very surface is essential to a structure that clearly wishes to follow the line of holy days onward through the Sabbath of Repentance, the Day of Atonement, the Festival of Tabernacles, and the Eighth Day of Solemn Assembly.

It follows that, unlike Genesis Rabbah and Leviticus Rabbah, the document focuses upon the life of the synagogue. Its framers set forth propositions in the manner of the authorship of Leviticus Rabbah. But these are framed by appeal not only to the rules governing the holy society, as in Leviticus Rabbah, but also to the principal events of Israel's history, celebrated in the worship of the synagogue. What we do not find in this Midrash-compilation is exposition of Pentateuchal or prophetic passages, verse by verse; the basis chosen by our authorship for organizing and setting forth its propositions is the character and theme of holy days and their special synagogue Torah-lections. That is, all of the selected base verses upon which the *parashiyyot* or chapters are built, Pentateuchal or prophetic, are identified with synagogal lections for specified holy days, special Sabbaths or festivals.

The contrast to the earlier compilations—this one is generally assigned to ca. 500—

Pisqa	Base-verse	Topic or Occasion
1.	*On the day Moses completed* (Num. 7:1)	Torah-lection for the Sabbath of Hanukkah
2.	*When you take the census* (Exod. 30:12)	Torah-lection for the Sabbath of Sheqalim first of the four Sabbaths prior to the advent of Nisan, in which Passover falls
3.	*Remember Amalek* (Deut. 25:17–19)	Torah-lection for the Sabbath of Zakhor second of the four Sabbaths prior to the advent of Nisan, in which Passover falls
4.	*Red heifer* (Num. 19:1f.)	Torah-lection for the Sabbath of Parah third of the four Sabbaths prior to the advent of Nisan, in which Passover falls
5.	*This month* (Exod. 12:1–2)	Torah-lection for the Sabbath of Hahodesh fourth of the four Sabbaths prior to the advent of Nisan, in which Passover falls
6.	*My offerings* (Num. 28:1–4)	Torah-lection for the New Moon which falls on a weekday
7.	*It came to pass at midnight* (Exod. 12:29–32)	Torah-lection for the first day of Passover
8.	*The first sheaf* (Lev. 23:11)	Torah-lection for the second day of Passover on which the first sheaves of barley were harvested and waved as an offering
9.	*When a bull or sheep or goat is born* (Lev. 22:26)	Lection for Passover
10.	*You shall set aside a tithe* (Deut. 14:22)	Torah-lection for Sabbath during Passover in the Land of Israel or for the eighth day of Passover outside of the Land of Israel
11.	*When Pharaoh let the people go* (Exod. 13:17–18)	Torah-lection for the Seventh Day of Passover
12.	*In the third month* (Exod. 19:1ff.)	Torah-lection for Pentecost
13.	*The words of Jeremiah* (Jer. 1:1–3)	Prophetic lection for the first of three Sabbaths prior to the Ninth of Ab
14.	*Hear* (Jer. 2:4–6)	Prophetic lection for the second of three Sabbaths prior to the Ninth of Ab
15.	*How lonely sits the city* (Lam. 1:1–2)	Prophetic lection for the third of three Sabbaths prior to the Ninth of Ab
16.	*Comfort* (Is. 40:1–2)	Prophetic lection for the first of three Sabbaths following the Ninth of Ab
17.	*But Zion said* (Is. 49:14–16)	Prophetic lection for the second of three Sabbaths following the Ninth of Ab
18.	*O afflicted one, storm tossed* (Is. 54:11–14)	Prophetic lection for the third of three Sabbaths following the Ninth of Ab
19.	*I even I am he who comforts you* (Is. 51:12–15)	Prophetic lection for the fourth of three Sabbaths following the Ninth of Ab
20.	*Sing aloud, O barren woman* (Is. 54:1ff.)	Prophetic lection for the fifth of three Sabbaths following the Ninth of Ab
21.	*Arise, Shine* (Is. 60:1–3)	Prophetic lection for the sixth of three Sabbaths following the Ninth of Ab
22.	*I will greatly rejoice in the Lord* (Is. 61:10–11)	Prophetic lection for the seventh of three Sabbaths following the Ninth of Ab
23.	*The New Year*	No base verse indicated. The theme is God's justice and judgment.
24.	*Return O Israel to the Lord your God* (Hos. 14:1–3)	Prophetic lection for the Sabbath of Repentance between New Year and Day of Atonement
25.	*Selihot*	No base verse indicated. The theme is God's forgiveness.
26.	*After the death of the two sons of Aaron* (Lev. 16:1ff.)	Torah-lection for the Day of Atonement
27.	*And you shall take on the first day* (Lev. 23:39–43)	Torah-lection for the first day of the Festival of Tabernacles
28.	*On the eighth day* (Num. 29:35–39)	Torah-lection for the Eighth Day of Solemn Assembly

is striking. The framers of Sifra and Sifré to Numbers and Sifré to Deuteronomy follow the verses of Scripture and attach to them whatever messages they wish to deliver. The authorship of Genesis Rabbah follows suit, though less narrowly guided by verses and more clearly interested in their broader themes. The framers of Leviticus Rabbah attached rather broad, discursive and syllogistic statements to verses of the book of Leviticus, but these verses do not follow in close sequence, one, then the next, as in Sifra and documents like it. That program of exposition of verses of Scripture read in or out of sequence, of organization of discourse in line with biblical books, parallel to the Tosefta's and Talmuds' authorships' exposition of passages of the Mishnah, read in close sequence or otherwise, we see, defines what our authorship has not done. Pesiqta deRab Kahana has been assembled so as to exhibit a viewpoint, a purpose of its particular authorship, one quite distinctive, in its own context (if not in a single one of its propositions!) to its framers or collectors and arrangers.

These synagogal discourses, read in their entirety, form a coherent statement of three propositions:

[1] God loves Israel, that love is unconditional, and Israel's response to God must be obedience to the religious duties that God has assigned, which will produce merit. Israel's obedience to God is what will save Israel. That means doing the religious duties as required by the Torah, which is the mark of God's love for—and regeneration of—Israel. The tabernacle symbolizes the union of Israel and God. When Israel does what God asks above, Israel will prosper down below. If Israel remembers Amalek down below, God will remember Amalek up above and will wipe him out. A mark of Israel's loyalty to God is remembering Amalek. God does not require the animals that are sacrificed, since man could never match God's appetite, if that were the issue, but the savor pleases God, as a mark of Israel's loyalty and obedience. The first sheaf returns to God God's fair share of the gifts that God bestows on Israel, and those who give it benefit, while those who hold it back suffer. Observing religious duties, typified by the rites of Sukkot, Tabernacles, brings a great reward of that merit that ultimately leads to redemption. God's ways are just, righteous and merciful, as shown by God's concern that the offspring remain with the mother for seven days. God's love for Israel is so intense that he wants to hold them back for an extra day after Sukkot in order to spend more time with them, because, unlike the nations of the world, Israel knows how to please God. This is a mark of God's love for Israel.

[2] God is reasonable, and when Israel has been punished, it is in accord with God's rules. God forgives penitent Israel and is abundant in mercy. Laughter is vain because it is mixed with grief. A wise person will not expect too much joy. But when people suffer, there ordinarily is a good reason for it. That is only one sign that God is reasonable and that God never did anything lawless and wrong to Israel or made unreasonable demands, and there was, therefore, no reason for Israel to lose confidence in God or to abandon him. God punished Israel to be sure. But this was done with reason. Nothing happened to Israel of which God did not give fair warning in advance, and Israel's failure to heed the prophets brought about her fall. And God will forgive a faithful Israel. Even though the Israelites sinned by making the golden calf, God forgave them and raised them up. On the New Year, God executes justice, but the justice is tempered with mercy. The rites of the New Year bring about divine judgment and also forgiveness because of the merit of the fathers. Israel must repent and return to the Lord, who is merciful and will forgive them for their sins. The penitential season of the New Year and Day of Atonement is the right time for confession and penitence, and God is sure to accept penitence. By exercising his power of mercy, the already-merciful God grows still stronger in mercy.

[3] God will save Israel personally at a time and circumstance of his own choosing. Israel may know what the future redemption will be like, because of the redemption from Egypt. The paradox of the red cow,

that what imparts uncleanness, namely touching the ashes of the red cow, produces cleanness, is part of God's ineffable wisdom, which man cannot fathom. Only God can know the precise moment of Israel's redemption. That is something man cannot find out on his own. But God will certainly fulfill the predictions of the prophets about Israel's coming redemption. The Exodus from Egypt is the paradigm of the coming redemption. Israel has lost Eden—but can come home, and, with God's help, will. God's unique power is shown through Israel's unique suffering. In God's own time, he will redeem Israel.

To develop this point, the authorship proceeds to further facts, worked out in its propositional discourses. The lunar calendar, particular to Israel, marks Israel as favored by God, for the new moon signals the coming of Israel's redemption, and the particular new moon that will mark the actual event is that of Nisan. When God chooses to redeem Israel, Israel's enemies will have no power to stop him, because God will force Israel's enemies to serve Israel, because of Israel's purity and loyalty to God. Israel's enemies are punished, and what they propose to do to Israel, God does to them. Both directly and through the prophets, God is the source of true comfort, which he will bring to Israel.

Israel thinks that God has forsaken them. But it is Israel who forsook God; God's love has never failed and will never fail. Even though he has been angry, his mercy still is near and God has the power and will to save Israel. God has designated the godly for himself and has already promised to redeem them. He will assuredly do so. God personally is the one who will comfort Israel. While Israel says there is no comfort, in fact, God will comfort Israel. Zion/Israel is like a barren woman, but Zion will bring forth children, and Israel will be comforted. Both God and Israel will bring light to Zion, which will give light to the world. The rebuilding of Zion will be a source of joy for the entire world, not for Israel alone. God will rejoice in Israel, Israel in God, like bride and groom.

Song of Songs Rabbah

The Song of Songs, called in the Christian Bible, "the Song of Solomon"—with both titles referring to the opening line, "The Song of Songs, which is Solomon's"—finds a place in the Torah because the collection of love-songs is understood to speak about the relationship between God and Israel. The intent of the compilers of Song of Songs Rabbah is to justify that reading. What this means is that Midrash-exegesis turns to everyday experience—the love of husband and wife—for a metaphor of God's love for Israel and Israel's love for God. Then, when Solomon's song says, "O that you would kiss me with the kisses of your mouth! For your love is better than wine" (Song 1:2), sages of blessed memory think of how God kissed Israel. Reading the Song of Songs as a metaphor, the Judaic sages state in a systematic and orderly way their entire structure and system.

The sages who compiled Song of Songs Rabbah read the Song of Songs as a sequence of statements of urgent love between God and Israel, the holy people. How they convey the intensity of Israel's love of God forms the point of special interest in this document. For it is not in propositions that they choose to speak, but in the medium of symbols. Sages here use language as a repertoire of opaque symbols in the form of words. They set forth sequences of words that connote meanings, elicit emotions, stand for events, form the verbal equivalent of pictures or music or dance or poetry. Through the repertoire of these verbal-symbols and their arrangement and rearrangement, the message the authors wish to convey emerges: not in so many words, but through words nonetheless. Sages chose for their compilation a very brief list of items among many possible candidates. They therefore determined to appeal to a highly restricted list of implicit meanings, calling upon some very few events or persons, repeatedly identifying these as the expressions of God's profound affection for Israel, and Israel's deep love for God. The message of the document comes not so much from stories of what happened or did not happen, assertions

of truth or denials of error, but rather from the repetitious rehearsal of sets of symbols.

In reading the love-songs of the Song of Songs as the story of the love affair of God and Israel, sages identify implicit meanings that are always few and invariably self-evident; no serious effort goes into demonstrating the fact that God speaks, or Israel speaks; the point of departure is the message and meaning the One or the other means to convey. To take one instance, time and again we shall be told that a certain expression of love in the poetry of the Song of Songs is God's speaking to Israel about the Sea, Sinai, and the world to come; or the first redemption, the one from Egypt; the second redemption, the one from Babylonia; and the third redemption, the one at the end of days. The repertoire of symbols covers Temple and schoolhouse, personal piety and public worship, and other matched pairs and sequences of coherent matters, all of them seen as embedded within the poetry. So Israel's holy life is metaphorized through the poetry of love and beloved, Lover and Israel. Long lists of alternative meanings or interpretations end up saying just one thing, but in different ways. The implicit meanings prove very few indeed. When in Song of Songs Rabbah we have a sequence of items alleged to form a taxon, that is, a set of things that share a common taxic indicator, what we have is a list. The list presents diverse matters that all together share, and therefore also set forth, a single fact or rule or phenomenon. That is why we can list them, in all their distinctive character and specificity, in a common catalogue of "other things" that pertain all together to one thing.

What do the compilers say through their readings of the metaphor of—to take one interesting example—the nut-tree for Israel? First, Israel prospers when it gives scarce resources for the study of the Torah or for carrying out religious duties; second, Israel sins but atones, and Torah is the medium of atonement; third, Israel is identified through carrying out its religious duties, e.g., circumcision; fourth, Israel's leaders had best watch their step; fifth, Israel will be in glory in the coming age; sixth, Israel has plenty of room for outsiders but cannot afford to lose a single member. What we have is a repertoire of fundamentals, dealing with Torah and Torah-study, the moral life and atonement, Israel and its holy way of life, Israel and its coming salvation. A sustained survey of these composites shows the contradictory facts that the several composites are heterogeneous, but the components of the composites derive from a rather limited list, essentially scriptural events and personalities, on the one side, and virtues of the Torah's holy way of life, on the other. Here is a survey:

> Joseph, righteous men, Moses, and Solomon.
>
> Patriarchs as against princes, offerings as against merit, and Israel as against the nations; those who love the king, proselytes, martyrs, penitents.
>
> First, Israel at Sinai; then Israel's loss of God's presence on account of the golden calf; then God's favoring Israel by treating Israel not in accord with the requirements of justice but with mercy.
>
> Dathan and Abiram, the spies, Jeroboam, Solomon's marriage to Pharaoh's daughter, Ahab, Jezebel, Zedekiah.
>
> Israel is feminine, the enemy (Egypt) masculine, but God the father saves Israel the daughter.
>
> Moses and Aaron, the Sanhedrin, the teachers of Scripture and Mishnah, the rabbis.
>
> The disciples; the relationship among disciples, public recitation of teachings of the Torah in the right order; lections of the Torah.
>
> The spoil at the Sea = the Exodus, the Torah, the Tabernacle, the ark.
>
> The patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, then Israel in Egypt, Israel's atonement and God's forgiveness.
>
> The Temple where God and Israel are joined, the Temple is God's resting place, the Temple is the source of Israel's fecundity.
>
> Israel in Egypt, at the Sea, at Sinai, and subjugated by the gentile kingdoms, and how the redemption will come.
>
> Rebecca, those who came forth from Egypt, Israel at Sinai, acts of loving kindness, the kingdoms who well-balanced rule Israel, the coming redemption.
>
> Fire above, fire below, meaning heavenly and altar fires; Torah in writing, Torah in memory; fire of Abraham, Moriah, bush, Elijah, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah.
>
> The Ten Commandments, show-fringes and phylacteries, recitation of the Shema and the Prayer, the tabernacle and the cloud

of the Presence of God, and the mezuzah.

The timing of redemption, the moral condition of those to be redeemed, and the past religious misdeeds of those to be redeemed.

Israel at the sea, Sinai, the Ten Commandments; then the synagogues and school houses; then the redeemer.

The Exodus, the conquest of the Land, the redemption and restoration of Israel to Zion after the destruction of the first Temple, and the final and ultimate salvation.

The Egyptians, Esau and his generals, and, finally, the four kingdoms.

Moses' redemption, the first, to the second redemption in the time of the Babylonians and Daniel.

The palanquin of Solomon: the priestly blessing, the priestly watches, the Sanhedrin, and the Israelites coming out of Egypt.

Israel at the sea and forgiveness for sins effected through their passing through the sea; Israel at Sinai; the war with Midian; the crossing of the Jordan and entry into the Land; the house of the sanctuary; the priestly watches; the offerings in the Temple; the Sanhedrin; the Day of Atonement.

God redeemed Israel without preparation; the nations of the world will be punished, after Israel is punished; the nations of the world will present Israel as gifts to the royal messiah, and here the base-verse refers to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Sihon, Og, Canaanites.

The return to Zion in the time of Ezra, the Exodus from Egypt in the time of Moses.

The patriarchs and with Israel in Egypt, at the Sea, and then before Sinai.

Abraham, Jacob, Moses.

Isaac, Jacob, Esau, Jacob, Joseph, the brothers, Jonathan, David, Saul, man, wife, paramour.

Abraham in the fiery furnace and Shadrach Meshach and Abednego, the Exile in Babylonia, well-balanced with reference to the return to Zion.

These components form not a theological system, made up of well-joined propositions and harmonious positions, nor propositions that are demonstrated syllogistically through comparison and contrast. The point is just the opposite; it is to show that many different things really do belong on the same list. That yields not a proposition that the list syllogistically demonstrates. The list yields only itself, but then the list invites our exegesis, with the connections among these items require. What this adds up to is not argument for proposition, hence comparison and contrast and rule-making of a philosophical order, but rather a theological structure—comprising well-defined attitudes.

Ruth Rabbah

Like the other Midrash-compilations of its class, Ruth Rabbah makes one paramount point through numerous exegetical details. Ruth Rabbah has only one message, expressed in a variety of components but single and cogent. It concerns the outsider who becomes the principal, the Messiah out of Moab, and this miracle is accomplished through mastery of the Torah. The main points of the document are these:

[1] Israel's fate depends upon its proper conduct toward its leaders.
[2] The leaders must not be arrogant.
[3] The admission of the outsider depends upon the rules of the Torah. These differentiate among outsiders. Those who know the rules are able to apply them accurately and mercifully.
[4] The proselyte is accepted because the Torah makes it possible to do so, and the condition of acceptance is complete and total submission to the Torah. Boaz taught Ruth the rules of the Torah, and she obeyed them carefully.
[5] Those proselytes who are accepted are respected by God and are completely equal to all other Israelites. Those who marry them are masters of the Torah, and their descendants are masters of the Torah, typified by David. Boaz in his day and David in his day were the same in this regard.
[6] What the proselyte therefore accomplishes is to take shelter under the wings of God's presence, and the proselyte who does so stands in the royal line of David, Solomon, and the Messiah. Over and over again, we see, the point is made that Ruth the Moabitess, perceived by the ignorant as an outsider, enjoyed complete equality with all other Israelites, because she had accepted the yoke of the Torah, married a great sage, and through her descendants produced the Messiah-sage, David.

Scripture has provided everything but the main point: the Moabite Messiah. But sages impose upon the whole their distinctive message, which is the priority of the Torah, the extraordinary power of the Torah to

join the opposites—Messiah, utter outsider—into a single figure, and to accomplish this union of opposites through a woman. The femininity of Ruth seems to me to be as critical to the whole as the Moabite origin: the two modes of the (from the Israelite perspective) abnormal, outsider as against Israelite, woman as against man, therefore are invoked, and both for the same purpose, to show how, through the Torah, all things become one. That is the message of the document, and, seen whole, the principal message, to which all other messages prove peripheral.

Ruth Rabbah is a commentary in the narrowest sense—verse by verse amplification, paraphrase, exposition—as it is a compilation in the working definition of this inquiry of mine. What holds the document together and gives it, if not coherence, then at least flow and movement, after all, are the successive passages of (mere) exposition. All the more stunning, therefore, is the simple fact that, when all has been set forth and completed, there really is that simple message that the Torah (as exemplified by the sage) makes the outsider into an insider, the Moabite into an Israelite, the offspring of the outsider into the Messiah: all on the condition, the only condition, that the Torah governs. This is a document about one thing, and it makes a single statement, and that statement is coherent.

The authorship decided to compose a document concerning the book of Ruth in order to make a single point. Everything else was subordinated to that definitive intention. Once the work got underway, the task was not one of exposition so much as repetition, not unpacking and exploring a complex conception, but restating the point, on the one side, and eliciting or evoking the proper attitude that was congruent with that point, on the other. The decision, viewed after the fact, was to make one statement in an enormous number of ways. It is that the Torah dictates Israel's fate, if you want to know what that fate will be, study the Torah, and if you want to control that fate, follow the model of the sage-Messiah. As usual, therefore, what we find is a recasting of the Deuteronomic-prophetic theology.

Three categories contain the topical and propositional messages of the document, as follows:

Israel and God: Israel's relationship with God encompasses the matter of the covenant, the Torah, and the Land of Israel, all of which bring to concrete and material expression the nature and standing of that relationship. This is a topic treated only casually by our compilers. They make a perfectly standard point, that Israel suffers because of sin (I:i). The famine in the time of the judges was because of Israel's rebellion: "My children are rebellious. But as to exterminating them, that is not possible, and to bring them back to Egypt is not possible, and to trade them for some other nation is something I cannot do. But this shall I do for them: lo, I shall torment them with suffering and afflict them with famine in the days when the judges judge" (III:i). This was because they got overconfident (III:ii).

Sometimes God saves Israel on account of its merit, sometimes for his own name's sake (X:i). God's punishment of Israel is always proportionate and appropriate, so LXXIV:i: "Just as in the beginning, Israel gave praise for the redemption: 'This is my God and I will glorify him' (Exod. 15:2), now it is for the substitution [of false gods for God]: 'Thus they exchanged their glory for the likeness of an ox that eats grass' (Ps. 106:20). You have nothing so repulsive and disgusting and strange as an ox when it is eating grass. In the beginning they would effect acquisition through the removal of the sandal, as it is said, 'Now this was the custom in former times in Israel concerning redeeming and exchanging: to confirm a transaction, the one drew off his sandal and gave it to the other, and this was the manner of attesting in Israel.' But now it is by means of the rite of cutting off." None of this forms a centerpiece of interest, and all of it complements the principal points of the writing.

Israel and the Nations: Israel's relationship with the nations is treated with interest in Israel's history, past, present, and future, and how that cyclical pattern is to be known. Only one nation figures in a consequential way, and that is Moab. Under these circumstances we can hardly gener-

alize and say that Moab stands for everybody outside of Israel. That is precisely the opposite of the fact. Moab stands for a problem within Israel, the Messiah from the periphery; and the solution to the problem lies within Israel and not in its relationships to the other, the nations.

Israel on Its Own: Israel on its own concerns the holy nation's understanding of itself: who is Israel, who is not? Within the same rubric we find consideration of Israel's capacity to naturalize the outsider, so to define itself as to extend its own limits, and other questions of self-definition. And, finally, when Israel considers itself, a principal concern is the nature of leadership, for the leader stands for and embodies the people. Therein lies the paradox of the base-document and the Midrash-compilation alike: how can the leader most wanted, the Messiah, come, as a matter of fact, from the excluded people and not from the holy people?

And, more to the point (for ours is not an accusatory document), how is the excluded included? And in what way do peripheral figures find their way to the center? Phrased in this way, the question yields the obvious answer: through the Torah as embodied by the sage, anybody can become Israel, and any Israelite can find his way to the center. Even more—since it is through Ruth that the Moabite becomes the Israelite, and since (for sages) the mother's status dictates the child's, we may go so far as to say that it is through the Torah that the woman may become a man (at least, in theory).

The sin of Israel, which caused the famine, was that it was judging its own judges. The Israelites were slothful in burying Joshua, and that showed disrespect to their leader (II:i). They were slothful about repentance in the time of the judges, and that is what caused the famine; excess of commitment to one's own affairs leads to sin. The Israelites did not honor the prophets (III:iii). The old have to bear with the young, and the young with the old, or Israel will go into exile (IV:i). The generation that judges its leadership ("judges") will be penalized (V:i). Arrogance to the authority of the Torah is penalized (V:i). Elimelech was punished because he broke the peoples' heart; everyone depended upon him, and he proved undependable (V:iii); so bad leadership will destroy Israel. Why was Elimelech punished? It is because he broke the Israelites' heart. When the years of drought came, his maid went out into the market place, with her basket in her hand. So the people of the town said, "Is this the one on whom we depended, that he can provide for the whole town with ten years of food? Lo, his maid is standing in the marketplace with her basket in her hand!" So Elimelech was one of the great men of the town and one of those who sustained the generation. But when the years of famine came, he said, "Now all the Israelites are going to come knocking on my door, each with his basket." The leadership of a community is its glory: "The great man of a town—he is its splendor, he is its glory, he is its praise. When he has turned from there, so too have turned its splendor, glory, and praise" (XI:i.1C).

A distinct but fundamental component of the theory of Israel concerns who is Israel and how one becomes a part of Israel. That theme proves fundamental to our document, so much of which is preoccupied with how Ruth can be the progenitor of the Messiah, deriving as she does not only from gentile but from Moabite stock. Israel's history follows rules that are to be learned in Scripture; nothing is random and all things are connected (IV:ii). The fact that the king of Moab honored God explains why God raised up from Moab "a son who will sit on the throne of the Lord" (VIII:i.3). The proselyte is discouraged but then accepted. Orpah, who left Naomi, was rewarded for the little that she did for her, but she was raped when she left her (XVIII:i.1–3). When Orpah went back to her people, she went back to her gods (XIX:i).

Ruth's intention to convert was absolutely firm, and Naomi laid out all the problems for her, but she acceded to every condition (XX:i). Naomi said to her, "My daughter, it is not the way of Israelite women to go to theaters and circuses put on by idolators." She said to her, "Where you go I will go." She said to her, "My daughter, it is not the way of Israelite women to live in a house that lacks a mezuzah." She said

to her, "Where you lodge I will lodge." "Your people shall be my people:" This refers to the penalties and admonitions against sinning. "And your God my God:" This refers to the other religious duties. And so onward: "for where you go I will go:" to the tent of meeting, Gilgal, Shiloh, Nob, Gibeon, and the eternal house. "And where you lodge I will lodge:" "I shall spend the night concerned about the offerings." "Your people shall be my people:" "so nullifying my idol." "And your God my God:" "to pay a full recompense for my action." I find here the centerpiece of the compilation and its principal purpose. The same message is at XXI:i.1–3.

Proselytes are respected by God, so XXII:i: "And when Naomi saw that she was determined to go with her, [she said no more]:" Said R. Judah b. R. Simon, "Notice how precious are proselytes before the Omnipresent. Once she had decided to convert, the Scripture treats her as equivalent to Naomi." Boaz, for his part, was equally virtuous and free of sins (XXVI:i). The law provided for the conversion of Ammonite and Moabite women, but not Ammonite and Moabite men, so the acceptance of Ruth the Moabite was fully in accord with the law, and anyone who did not know that fact was an ignoramus (XXVI:i.4, among many passages). An Israelite hero who came from Ruth and Boaz was David, who was a great master of the Torah. Ruth truly accepted Judaism upon the instruction, also, of Boaz (XXXIV:i). Ruth had prophetic power (XXXVI:ii). Ruth was rewarded for her sincere conversion by Solomon (XXXVIII:i.1).

Taking shelter under the wings of the Presence of God, which is what the convert does, is the greatest merit accorded to all who do deeds of grace. The language that Boaz used to Ruth, "Come here," bore with it deeper reference to six: David, Solomon, the throne as held by the Davidic monarchy, and ultimately, the Messiah. Boaz instructed Ruth on how to be a proper Israelite woman (LIII:i). So did Naomi encompass Ruth within Israel. Moab, whence Ruth came, was conceived not for the sake of fornication but for the sake of Heaven (LV:i.1B). Boaz, for his part, was a master of the Torah and when he ate and drank, that formed a typology for his study of the torah (LVI:i). His was a life of grace, Torah study, and marriage for holy purposes. Whoever trusts in God is exalted, and that refers to Ruth and Boaz; God put it in his heart to bless her (LVII:i). David sang Psalms to thank God for his great-grandmother, Ruth (LIX:i.5). Because of the merit of the six measures that Boaz gave Ruth, six righteous persons came forth from him, each with six virtues: David, Hezekiah, Josiah, Hananiah-Mishael-Azariah (counted as one), Daniel and the royal Messiah.

God facilitated the union of Ruth and Boaz (LXVIII:i). Boaz's relative was ignorant for not knowing that while a male Moabite was excluded, a female one was acceptable for marriage. The blessing of Boaz was, "May all the children you have come from this righteous woman" (LXXIX:i), and that is precisely the blessing accorded to Isaac and to Elkanah. God made Ruth an ovary, which she had lacked (LXXX:i). Naomi was blessed with messianic blessings (LXXXI:i). On account of the blessings of the women, the line of David was not wholly exterminated in the time of Athaliah. David was ridiculed because he was descended from Ruth, the Moabitess (LXXXV:i). David referred to and defended his Moabite origins (LXXXIX:i). Just as David's descent from Ruth was questioned, so his descent from Judah via Tamar could be questioned too, and that would compromise the whole tribe of Judah.

Lamentations Rabbah

The theme of Lamentations Rabbati is Israel's relationship with God, and the message concerning that theme is that the stipulative covenant still and always governs that relationship. Therefore everything that happens to Israel makes sense and bears meaning; and Israel is not helpless before its fate but controls its own destiny. This is the one and whole message of this compilation, and it is the only message that is repeated throughout; everything else proves secondary and derivative of the fundamental proposition that the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem in 70 C.E.—as much as in 586 B.C.E.—

proves the enduring validity of the covenant, its rules and its promise of redemption.

Lamentations Rabbah's is a covenantal theology, in which Israel and God have mutually and reciprocally agreed to bind themselves to a common Torah; the rules of the relationship are such that an infraction triggers its penalty willy-nilly; but obedience to the Torah likewise brings its reward, in the context envisaged by our compilers, the reward of redemption. The compilation sets forth a single message, which is reworked in only a few ways: Israel suffers because of sin, God will respond to Israel's atonement, on the one side, and loyalty to the covenant in the Torah, on the other. And when Israel has attained the merit that accrues through the Torah, God will redeem Israel. That is the simple, rock-hard and repeated message of this rather protracted reading of the book of Lamentations. Still, Lamentations Rabbah proves nearly as much a commentary in the narrowest sense—verse by verse amplification, paraphrase, exposition—as it is a cogent, thematic compilation.

What holds the document together and gives it, if not coherence, then at least flow and movement are the successive passages of (mere) exposition. All the more stunning, therefore, is the simple fact that, when all has been set forth and completed, there really is that simple message that God's unique relationship with Israel, which is unique among the nations, works itself out even now, in a time of despair and disappointment. The resentment of the present condition, recapitulating the calamity of the destruction of the Temple, finds its resolution and remission in the redemption that will follow Israel's regeneration through the Torah—that is the program, that is the proposition, and in this compilation, there is no other.

Israel's relationship with God is treated with special reference to the covenant, the Torah, and the land. By reason of the sins of the Israelites, they have gone into exile with the destruction of the Temple. The founders of the family, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, also went into exile. Now they cannot be accused of lacking in religious duties, attention to teachings of the Torah and of prophecy, carrying out the requirements of righteousness (philanthropy) and good deeds, and the like. The people are at fault for their own condition (I:i.1–7). Torah-study defines the condition of Israel, e.g., "If you have seen [the inhabitants of] towns uprooted from their places in the land of Israel, know that it is because they did not pay the salary of scribes and teachers" (II.i).

So long as Judah and Benjamin—meaning, in this context, the surviving people, after the northern tribes were taken away by the Assyrians—were at home, God could take comfort at the loss of the ten tribes; once they went into exile, God began to mourn II:ii) Israel (now meaning not the northern tribes, but the remaining Jews) survived Pharaoh and Sennacherib, but not God's punishment (III:i). After the disaster in Jeremiah's time, Israel emerged from Eden—but could come back. (IV:i). God did not play favorites among the tribes; when any of them sinned, he punished them through exile (VI:i). Israel was punished because of the ravaging of words of Torah and prophecy, righteous men, religious duties and good deeds (VII:i). The land of Israel, the Torah, and the Temple are ravaged, to the shame of Israel (Jer. 9:19–21) (VIII:i). The Israelites practiced idolatry, still more did the pagans; God was neglected by the people and was left solitary, so God responded to the people's actions (X:i). If you had achieved the merit (using the theological language at hand), then you would have enjoyed everything, but since you did not have the merit, you enjoyed nothing (XI:i).

The Israelites (throughout referring to the surviving Jews, after the northern tribes were taken into exile) did not trust God, so they suffered disaster ((XIII.i). The Israelites scorned God and brought dishonor upon God among the nations (XV:i). While God was generous with the Israelites in the wilderness, under severe conditions, he was harsh with them in civilization, under pleasant conditions, because they sinned and angered him (XVI:i). With merit one drinks good water in Jerusalem, without, bad water in the exile of Babylonia; with merit one sings songs and Psalms in Jerusalem, without, dirges and lamentations in Babylonia. At stake is peoples' merit, not God's grace (XIX:i). The contrast is drawn between

redemption and disaster, the giving of the Torah and the destruction of the Temple (XX:i). When the Israelites went into exile among the nations of the world, not one of them could produce a word of Torah from his mouth; God punished Israel for its sins (XXI:i). Idolatry was the cause (XXII:i). The destruction of the Temple was possible only because God had already abandoned it (XXIV:ii). When the Temple was destroyed, God was answerable to the patriarchs for what he had done (XXIV:ii). The Presence of God departed from the Temple by stages (XXV:i).

The Holy One punishes Israel only after bringing testimony against them (XXVII:i). The road that led from the salvation of Hezekiah is the one that brought Israel to the disaster brought about by Nebuchadnezzar. Then the Israelite kings believed, but the pagan king did not believe; and God gave the Israelite kings a reward for their faith, through Hezekiah, and to the pagan king, without his believing and without obeying, were handed over Jerusalem and its Temple. (XXX:i). Before the Israelites went into exile, the Holy One, blessed be he, called them 'bad'. But when they had gone into exile, he began to sing their praises (XXXI:i). The Israelites were sent into exile only after they had defied the Unique One of the world, the Ten Commandments, circumcision, which had been given to the twentieth generation [Abraham], and the Pentateuch (XXXV:ii, iii). When the Temple was destroyed and Israel went into exile, God mourned in the manner that mortals do (XXXV:iv). The prophetic critique of Israel is mitigated by mercy. Israel stands in an ambiguous relationship with God, both divorced and not divorced (XXXV:vi, vii).

Before God penalizes, he has already prepared the healing for the penalty. As to all the harsh prophecies that Jeremiah issued against the Israelites, Isaiah first of all anticipated each and pronounced healing for it (XXXVI:ii). The Israelites err for weeping frivolously, "but in the end there will be a real weeping for good cause" (XXXVI:iv, v). The ten tribes went into exile, but the Presence of God did not go into exile. Judah and Benjamin went into exile, but the Presence of God did not go into exile. But when the children went into exile, then the Presence of God went into exile (XXXIX:iii). The great men of Israel turned their faces away when they saw people sinning, and God did the same to them (XL:ii). When the Israelites carry out the will of the Holy One, they add strength to the strength of heaven, and when they do not, they weaken the power of the One above (XL:ii). The exile and the redemption will match (XL:ii). In her affliction, Jerusalem remembered her rebellion against God (XLI:i).

When the gentile nations sin, there is no sequel in punishment, but when the Israelites sin, they also are punished (XLII:i). God considered carefully how to bring the evil upon Israel (XLVIII:i). God suffers with Israel and for Israel (L:i), a minor theme in a massive compilation of stories. By observing their religious duties the Israelites became distinguished before God (LIII:i). With every thing with which the Israelites sinned, they were smitten, and with that same thing they will be comforted. When they sinned with the head, they were smitten at the head, but they were comforted through the head (LVI:i). There is an exact match between Israel's triumph and Israel's downfall. Thus: "Just as these—the people of Jericho—were punished through the destruction effected by priest and prophet [the priests and Joshua at Jericho], so these—the people of Jerusalem in the time of the Babylonian conquest—were subject to priest and prophet [Jeremiah]. Just as these who were punished were penalized through the ram's horn and shouting, so Israel will be saved through ram's horn and shouting" (LVII:ii).

God's relationship to Israel was complicated by the relationship to Jacob, thus: "Isn't it the fact that the Israelites are angering me only because of the icon of Jacob that is engraved on my throne? Here, take it, it's thrown in your face!" (LVII:ii). God is engaged with Israel's disaster (LIX:ii). The Israelites did not fully explore the limits of the measure of justice, so the measure of justice did not go to extremes against them (LX:i, LXI:i). God's decree against Jerusalem comes from of old (LXIV:i). God forewarned

Israel and showed Israel favor, but it did no good (LXIX:i). God did to Israel precisely what he had threatened long ago (LXXIII:i). But God does not rejoice in punishing Israel. The argument between God and Israel is framed in this way. The Community of Israel says that they are the only ones who accepted God; God says, I rejected everybody else for you (LXXIX:ii). Israel accepted its suffering as atonement and asked that the suffering expiate the sin (LXXV:i).

God suffers along with Israel, Israel's loyalty will be recognized and appreciated by God, and, in the meantime, the Israelites will find in the Torah the comfort that they require. The nations will be repaid for their actions toward Israel in the interval. Even though the Holy One, blessed be he, is angry with his servants, the righteous, in this world, in the world to come he goes and has mercy on them (LXXXVI:i). God is good to those that deserve it (LXXXVII:i). God mourns for Israel the way human mourners mourn (LXXXVIII:i). God will never abandon Israel (LXXXIX:i). The Holy Spirit brings about redemption (XCV:i). It is better to be punished by God than favored by a gentile king (CXXII:i).

The upshot here is that persecution in the end is good for Israel, because it produces repentance more rapidly than prophecy ever did, with the result that the redemption is that much nearer. The enemy will also be punished for its sins, and, further, God's punishment is appropriate and well-placed. People get what they deserve, both Israel and the others. God should protect Israel and not leave them among the nations, but that is not what he has done (CXXIII:i). God blames that generation for its own fate, and the ancestors claim that the only reason the Israelites endure is because of the merit of the ancestors. (CXXIX:i). The redemption of the past tells us about the redemption in the future (CXXX:i). "The earlier generations, because they smelled the stench of only part of the tribulations inflicted by the idolatrous kingdoms, became impatient. But we, who dwell in the midst of the four kingdoms, how much the more [are we impatient]!" (CXXXI:i).

God's redemption is certain, so people who are suffering should be glad, since that is a guarantee of coming redemption. So if the words of the prophet Uriah are carried out, the words of the prophet Zechariah will be carried out, while if the words of the prophet Uriah prove false, then the words of the prophet Zechariah will not be true either (CXL:i). The Temple will be restored, and Israel will regain its place, as God's throne and consort (CXLI:i). Punishment and rejection will be followed by forgiveness and reconciliation (CXLII:i). The Jews can accomplish part of the task on their own, even though they throw themselves wholly on God's mercy. The desired age is either like that of Adam, or like that of Moses and Solomon, or like that of Noah and Abel; all three possibilities link the coming redemption to a time of perfection, Eden, or the age prior to idolatry, or the time of Moses and Solomon, the builders of the Tabernacle and the Temple, respectively (CXLIII:i). If there is rejection, then there is no hope, but if there is anger, there is hope, because someone who is angry may in the end be appeased. Whenever there is an allusion to divine anger, that too is a mark of hope (CXLIV:i).

Israel's relationship with the nations is treated with interest in Israel's history, past, present, and future, and how that cycle is to be known. But there is no theory of "the other," or the outsider here; the nations are the enemy; the compilers find nothing of merit to report about them. Israel's difference from the other, for which God is responsible, accounts for the dislike that the nations express toward Israel; Israel's present condition as minority, different and despised on account of the difference, is God's fault and choice. Israel was besieged not only by the Babylonians but also the neighbors, the Ammonites and Moabites (IX:i), and God will punish them too. The public ridicule of Jews' religious rites contrasts with the Jews' own perception of their condition. Even though the nations of the world go into exile, their exile is not really an exile at all. But as for Israel, their exile really is an exile. The nations of the world, who eat the bread and drink the wine of others, do not really experience exile. But the Israelites,

who do not eat the bread and drink the wine of others, really do experience exile (XXXVII:i).

The Ammonites and Moabites joined with the enemy and behaved very spitefully (XLIV:i). When the Israelites fled from the destruction of Jerusalem, the nations of the world sent word everywhere to which they fled and shut them out (LV:i). But this was to be blamed on God: "If we had intermarried with them, they would have accepted us." LXIX:i There are ten references to "might" of Israel; when the Israelites sinned, these forms of might were taken away from them and given to the nations of the world. The nations of the world ridicule the Jews for their religious observances (LXXXIII:i). These propositions simply expose, in their own framework, the same proposition as the ones concerning God's relationship to Israel and Israel's relationship to God. The relationship between Israel and the nations forms a subset of the relationship of Israel and God; nothing in the former relationship happens on its own, but all things express in this mundane context the rules and effects of the rules that govern in the transcendent one. All we learn about Israel and the nations is that the covenant endures, bearing its own inevitable sanctions and consequences.

Our authorship has little interest in Israel out of relationship with either God or the nations. Israel on its own forms a subordinated and trivial theme; whatever messages we do find take on meaning only in the initial framework, that defined by Israel's relationship with God. Israel is never on its own. The bitterness of the ninth of Ab is contrasted with the bitter herbs with which the first redemption is celebrated (XVIII:i). The same contrast is drawn between the giving of the Torah and the destruction of the Temple (XX:i). If Israel had found rest among the nations, she would not have returned to the holy land (XXXVII:ii). The glory of Israel lay in its relationship to God, in the Sanhedrin, in the disciples of sages, in the priestly watches, in the children (XL:i). Israel first suffers, then rejoices; her unfortunate condition marks the fact that Israel stands at the center of things (LIX:iii). Israel has declined through the generations (CXXXVII:i).

Esther Rabbah Part One

In Esther Rabbah Part One (that is, covering the book of Esther's first two chapters), we find only one message, and it is reworked in only a few ways. It is that the nations are swine, their rulers fools, and Israel is subjugated to them, though it should not be, only because of its own sins. No other explanation serves to account for the paradox and anomaly that prevail. But just as God saved Israel in the past, so the salvation that Israel can attain will recapitulate the former ones. On the stated theme, Israel among the nations, sages set forth a proposition entirely familiar from the books of Deuteronomy through Kings, on the one side, and much of prophetic literature, on the other.

The proposition is familiar, and so is the theme; but since the book of Esther can hardly be characterized as "Deuteronomic," lacking all interest in the covenant, the land, and issues of atonement (beyond the conventional sackcloth, ashes, and fasting, hardly the fodder for prophetic regeneration and renewal!), the sages' distinctive viewpoint in the document must be deemed an original and interesting contribution of their own. But the message is somewhat more complicated than merely a negative judgment against the nations. If I have to identify one recurrent motif that captures that theology, it is the critical role of Esther and Mordecai, particularly Mordecai, who, as sage, emerges in the position of messiah. And that is a message that is particular to the exposition of the book of Esther's opening chapters.

Like Lamentations Rabbah, Esther Rabbah Part One is as much a commentary in the narrowest sense—verse by verse amplification, paraphrase, exposition—as a cogent compilation. It too is held together and given coherence by successive passages of (mere) exposition. Here the single message that emerges is that the Torah (as exemplified by the sage) makes the outsider into an insider, the woman into a heroic leader

(just as, in the book of Ruth, we see how the Moabite is turned into an Israelite, the offspring of the outsider into the Messiah). These paradoxes come about on the condition, the only condition, that the Torah govern. This is a document about one thing, and it makes a single statement, and that statement is coherent, just as is the case with Ruth Rabbah, the counterpart and complement. Where we find a woman in the systemic center of a document's statement, there we uncover the document's critical message, that which can account for everything and its opposite, and for the transformation of otherwise fixed values, e.g., in this case, the exclusion of women from the center of consideration.

Gender thus defines the focus for both Esther Rabbah I and Ruth Rabbah, yielding the opposite of what is anticipated. Ruth Rabbah has the Messiah born of an outsider, Esther Rabbah has salvation come through a woman. For Esther and Mordecai, woman and the sage-Messiah, function in this document in much the same way that Ruth and David, woman and sage-Messiah, work in Ruth Rabbah. While the sages of Ruth Rabbah face their own, distinctive problem, the way the outsider becomes the insider, the Moabite-Messiah, still, Ruth Rabbah and Esther Rabbah Part One deal with the same fundamental fact: the Messiah-sage dictates the future of Israel, because he (never she) realizes the rule of the Torah. In Esther Rabbah Part One many things say one thing: the Torah dictates Israel's fate, if you want to know what that fate will be, study the Torah, and if you want to control that fate, follow the model of the sage-Messiah.

These episodic propositions comprise the document's single message. Bad government comes about because of the sins of the people (VII:i). But that proposition is realized in discourse mainly about bad government by the nations, and, given the base-document, that is hardly surprising. God was neglected by the people, so he is left solitary through his own actions, which responded to the people's actions (XVIII:iii). This serves Lamentations Rabbah as its Petihta 10; but the proposition surely is not alien to our base-document. The contrast between the relative neglect of this inviting topic and the intense interest in another, the one that follows, which characterize Esther Rabbah Part One, and the opposite emphases and interests revealed in Lamentations Rabbah, is readily discerned.

Our compilation concentrates upon this one subject, and all of its important messages present the same proposition, in several parts. Israel's life among the nations is a sequence of sorrows, each worse than the preceding. But through Torah, Israel can break the cycle. When Israel is subjugated by the nations, God will not spurn, abhor, destroy them or break his covenant with them—in the age of Babylonia, Media, the Greeks, and the wicked kingdom; of Vespasian, Trajan, Haman, the Romans (II:i.1). The same is repeated at III:i.1–5.

In comparing the ages through which the Jews had lived, Babylonian, Median, Greek, Roman, the same position recurs. When the righteous achieve great power, there is joy in the world, and when the wicked achieve great power, there is groaning in the world; this is so of Israelite and gentile kings (IV:i). Gentile kings may do good things or bad things (VI:i). But even the good kings are not without flaws. When a bad king rules, it is because of the sins of the people, those who will not do the will of the creator (VII:i). God worked through whomever he chose. From the beginning of the creation of the world, the Holy One blessed be he designated for every one what was suitable. Ahasuerus the first of those who sell [people at a price], Haman the first of those who buy [people at a price] (VIII:i). There are decisions made by God that determine the life of nations and individuals; Israel's history follows rules that can be learned in Scripture; nothing is random, all things are connected, and fundamental laws of history dictate the meaning of what happens among the nations (VIII:ii).

Ultimately, God will destroy Israel's enemies (IX:i). God will save Israel when not a shred of merit will be found among the nations of the world (X:i.15). The prosperity of the nations is only for a time; then the nations will be punished and Israel redeemed

(XI:i). There will be full recompense, and the contrast between Israel's subjugation and the nations' prosperity will be resolved. The principle of measure for measure governs. Pagan kings propose to do what God himself does not claim to be able to do. They cannot accomplish their goal; if God wanted to, God could do it. But in the age to come, God will accomplish the union of opposites, which in this time pagan kings claim to be able to do but cannot accomplish (XVII:i). Pagan kings rebel against not only God but also their own gods (XVIII:i). But for the slightest gesture of respect for God they are rewarded (XVIII:i).

God is in full control of everyone at all times. The salvation in the time of Ahasuerus was directly linked, detail by detail, to the punishment in the time of Nebuchadnezzar (XVIII:ii). Israel's relationship with one empire is no different from its relationship to the other. The same base-verse, Ps. 10:14, accounts for both Rome and Sasanian Iran, the world-empires of the day. The relationship of each to Israel is the same. Both of them call into question Israel's faith in the power of God by showing off their own power. Esau/Romulus and Remus pay back God's blessing by building Temples of idolatry in Rome. Belshazzar/Vashti/Iran do the same by oppressing Israel. Both intend by their power to prove that they are stronger than God. But, the premise maintains, God will show in the end who is the stronger. The upshot is to underline the irony that derives from the contrast between the empires' power and God's coming display of his power; that and one other thing: the challenge facing God in showing his power over theirs (XVIII:iv).

Israel possesses wise men, the nations' sages are fools thus. There is a correspondence between how Israel suffers and how the nations prosper (XXVIII:I). Saul lost the throne because he did not destroy Amalek, Esther got it back because she did. Obedience to divine instructions made the difference. Persian women suffered and were humiliated because they had ridiculed Israelite women (XXXIV:i). Those who do righteousness at all times are going to be the ones who will carry out God's salvation. They that they that do righteousness at all times are to be remembered when God's salvation is required and it is performed through them. Accordingly, Mordecai in his generation was equivalent to Moses in his generation.

God always responds to Israel's need. The reason this point is pertinent here is the repeated contrast, also, of Mordecai and Haman; the upshot is that ultimately Israel gets what it has coming just as do the nations; and when Israel gets its redemption, it is through people of a single sort, Moses, Abraham, Mordecai. The redemptions of Israel in times past then provide the model and paradigm for what is going to happen in the future. None of this has any bearing on the land and nothing invokes the covenant, which is why I see the entire matter in the present context. When God saves Israel, it is always in response to how they have been punished (XXXVIII:i.9).

As to Israel's distinctive leadership and its life within its own boundaries, the nature of the book of Esther, with its concern for its heroes, Mordecai and Esther, secures for this subject a more than negligible place in the propositional program of the midrash-compilation. Israel's leadership consistently follows the same norms, and what the ancestors taught, the descendants learn. Thus Esther behaved as had Rachel (LI:i), who kept silent when she saw her wedding band on the hand of her sister. Benjamin, her son, kept silent, even though he knew of the sale of Joseph. Saul, from whom Esther descended also kept silent (1 Sam. 10:16). What happens now therefore has already happened, and we know how to respond and what will come in consequence of our deeds.

Tractate Abot, The Fathers

Tractate Abot is made up of five chapters of wisdom-sayings, neither legal nor exegetical in character, but mainly a handbook of wise sayings for disciples of sages, especially those involved in administration of the law. These sayings, miscellaneous in character, are assigned to named authorities. The rhetoric of The Fathers is dictated by aphoristic style, producing wise sayings pre-

sented as a list. The topic, over all, derives from the realm of wisdom: right conduct with God, society, self. The logic of cogent discourse derives from the notion that a list of sages constitutes a principle of coherent composition, and the diverse sayings fit together within the sustaining logic of a list of authorities of a given classification. The list holds together because everything on it is part of a chain of formulation and transmission—tradition—beginning with Moses on Sinai. So one sentence joins the next because all the sentences enjoy the same status, that imparted by the Torah. That logic deriving from authority makes it possible for the audience of the document to see relationships of order, proportion, and sustained discourse, where we see merely a sequence of essentially discrete sayings. The rhetorical device rests upon the same principle of cogent discourse: the listing of authorities suffices as a principle of rhetorical composition—and persuasion. The topical program—with its recurrent emphasis on Torah-study and the social, intellectual, and personal virtues required for Torah-study—is equally cogent with the logical and rhetorical decisions made by the authorship of the whole.

Always published along with the Mishnah but autonomous of that document in all differentiating formal and programmatic attributes, the compilation cites authorities of the generation generally assumed to have flourished after the closure of the Mishnah and hence may be situated at ca. 250 C.E.—a mere guess. The Mishnah's rhetorical program exercised no influence whatsoever on the formulation of tractate Abot. The mnemonic patterns characteristic of the Mishnah are not to be found. The topical division and organization of the Mishnah-tractates one by one and as a set play no role. Tractate Abot therefore bears no formal, or substantive, relationship to the Mishnah. Its rhetoric, logic of coherent discourse, and topic mark the document as utterly anomalous in Rabbinic literature; it has no parallel.

But its proposition and message form the keystone and centerpiece of that literature. The document serves as the Mishnah's first and most important documentary apologetic, stating in abstract and general terms the ideals for the virtuous life that are set forth by the Mishnah's sages and animate its laws. Its presentation of sayings of sages extending from Sinai to figures named in the Mishnah itself links the Mishnah to Sinai. The link consists of the chain of tradition handed on through the chain of sages itself. It follows that, because of the authorities cited in its pages, the Mishnah constitutes part of the Torah of Sinai, for by the evidence of the chain of tradition, the Mishnah too forms a statement of revelation, that is, "Torah revealed to Moses at Sinai." This is expressed in the opening sentence (M. Ab. 1:1):

> Moses received the Torah at Sinai and handed it on to Joshua, Joshua to elders, and elders to prophets. And prophets handed it on to the men of the great assembly. They said three things: Be prudent in judgment. Raise up many disciples. Make a fence for the Torah.

The verbs, receive . . . hand on . . ., in Hebrew yield the words *qabbalah*, tradition, and *masoret*, also tradition.

The theological proposition that validates the Mishnah is that the Torah is a matter of tradition. The tradition goes from master to disciple, Moses to Joshua. And, further, those listed later on the same list include authorities of the Mishnah itself. That fact forms an implicit claim that part of the Torah was, and is, orally formulated and orally transmitted, and the Mishnah's authorities stand in the tradition of Sinai, so that the Mishnah too forms part of the Torah of Sinai.

This position is different from that taken by pseudepigraphic writers, who imitate the style of Scripture, or who claim to speak within that same gift of revelation as Moses. It is one thing to say one's holy book is Scripture because it is like Scripture, or to claim that the author of the holy book has a revelation independent of that of Moses. These two positions concede to the Torah of Moses priority over their own holy books. The Mishnah's first apologists make no such concession, when they allege that the Mishnah is part of the Torah of Moses. They appeal to the highest possible authority in the Israelite framework, claiming the most one can claim in behalf of the book which, in fact, bears the names of men who lived

fifty years before the apologists themselves. The sages' apologia for the Mishnah, therefore, rests upon the persons of the sages themselves: incarnations of the Torah of Sinai in the here-and-now.

Unlike Mishnah-tractates, tractate Abot deals with no single topic, and, it follows, the document also contains no proposition that is argued in detail. But the first two chapters do set forth a proposition, which is to be discerned not from what is said but from the chain of names that is set out in those chapters. Specifically, the list of names and the way in which they are arranged contains the claim that the two great pillars of the Mishnah—the patriarch of the Jewish community in the Land of Israel, that is, Judah the Patriarch (Hebrew: nasi), sponsor of the document and recognized by the Roman government as ruler of the Jewish ethnic group in the country, and the sages, who studied and, where relevant, applied the laws of the Mishnah, stand equally in the chain of tradition backward to Sinai. This union of the patriarch and the sages forms the document's proposition concerning the sponsorship of the Mishnah and the divine authority that is accorded to its sages.

In Chapter One's list of names there is a clear logic of fixed association in play. The names of the listed sages form a coherent pattern. What is attributed to the sages exhibits a certain topical coherence but in substance is random and episodic. Major authorities of the Mishnah stand in a chain of tradition to Sinai; hence, the Mishnah contains the Torah of Sinai. The order of the names is therefore deliberate and unites what is attributed, though the sentences themselves bear slight connections among themselves:

1:2 Simeon the Righteous was one of the last survivors of the great assembly. He would say: On three things does the world stand: On the Torah, and on the Temple service, and on deeds of loving-kindness.

1:3 Antigonus of Sokho received [the Torah] from Simeon the Righteous. He would say: Do not be like servants who serve the master on condition of receiving a reward, but [be] like servants who serve the master not on condition of receiving a reward. And let the fear of Heaven be upon you.

1:4 Yose ben Yoezer of Zeredah and Yose ben Yohanan of Jerusalem received [the Torah] from them. Yose ben Yoezer says: Let your house be a gathering place for sages. And wallow in the dust of their feet, and drink in their words with gusto.

1:5 Yose ben Yohanan of Jerusalem says: Let your house be open wide. And seatthe poor at your table ["make the poor members of your household"]. And don't talk too much with women. (He referred to a man's wife, all the more so is the rule to be applied to the wife of one's fellow. In this regard did sages say: So long as a man talks too much with a woman, he brings trouble on himself, wastes time better spent on studying the Torah, and ends up an heir of Gehenna.)

1:6 Joshua ben Perahyah and Nittai the Arbelite received [the Torah] from them. Joshua ben Perahyah says: Set up a master for yourself. And get yourself a companion-disciple. And give everybody the benefit of the doubt.

1:7 Nittai the Arbelite says: Keep away from a bad neighbor. And don't get involved with a bad person. And don't give up hope of retribution.

1:8A Judah ben Tabbai and Simeon ben Shetah received [the Torah] from them.

1:8B Judah ben Tabbai says: Don't make yourself like one of those who advocate before judges [while you yourself are judging a case]. And when the litigants stand before you, regard them as guilty. But when they leave you, regard them as acquitted (when they have accepted your judgment).

1:9 Simeon ben Shetah says: Examine the witnesses with great care. And watch what you say, lest they learn from what you say how to lie.

1:10 Shemaiah and Avtalyon received [the Torah] from them. Shemaiah says: Love work. Hate authority. Don't get friendly with the government.

1:11 Avtalyon says: Sages, watch what you say, lest you become liable to the punishment of exile, and go into exile to a place of bad water, and disciples who follow you drink bad water and die, and the name of Heaven be thereby profaned.

1:12 Hillel and Shammai received [the Torah] from them. Hillel says: Be disciples of Aaron, loving peace and pursuing grace, loving people and drawing them near to the Torah.

1:13A He would say [in Aramaic]: A name made great is a name destroyed, and one who does not add, subtracts.
1:13B And who does not learn is liable todeath. And the one who uses the crown, passes away.
1:14 He would say: If I am not for myself, who is for me? And when I am for myself, what am I? And if not now, when?
1:15 Shammai says: Make your learning of the Torah a fixed obligation. Say little and do much. Greet everybody cheerfully.
1:16 Rabban Gamaliel says: Set up a master for yourself. Avoid doubt. Don't tithe by too much guesswork.
1:17 Simeon his son says: All my life I grew up among the sages, and I found nothing better for a person [the body] than silence. And the learning is not the thing, but the doing. And whoever talks too much causes sin.
1:18 Rabban Simeon ben Gamaliel says: On three things does the world stand: on justice, on truth, and on peace. As it is said, Execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates (Zech 8:16).

The intent of the list is not only to establish the link to Sinai; the fixed associative list bears a second polemic, which emerges in the pairs of names and how they are arranged:

Moses
Joshua
Elders
Prophets
Men of the Great Assembly
Simeon the Righteous
Antigonus of Sokho

1. Yosé ben Yoezer	Yosé b. Yohanan
2. Joshua b. Perahyah	Nittai the Arbelite
3. Judah b. Tabbai	Simeon b. Shetah
4. Shemaiah	Avtalyon
5. Hillel	Shammai

Gamaliel
Simeon his son [that is, Simeon b. Gamaliel]
Rabban Simeon b. Gamaliel

Once the pairs end, we find Gamaliel, who is (later on) represented as the son of Hillel, and then Gamaliel and Simeon, his son, Hillel's grandson.

The cogency of the list emerges when we realize that the names Gamaliel, then Simeon, continued through this same family, of primary authorities, through Gamaliel II, ruler of the Jewish community after the destruction of the second Temple in 70 and into the second century, then his son, Simeon b. Gamaliel, ruler of the Jewish community after the defeat of Bar Kokhba in 135—and also, as it happens, the father of Judah the Patriarch, this same Judah the Patriarch who sponsored the Mishnah. Judah the Patriarch stands in the chain of tradition to Sinai. So not only the teachings of the sages of the Mishnah, but also the political sponsor of the document, who also was numbered among the sages, formed part of this same tradition. The list itself bears the message that the patriarch and sages employed by him carry forward the tradition of Sinai.

Abot deRabbi Natan. The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan

In 250, Mishnah-tractate Abot, The Fathers, delivered its message through aphorisms assigned to named sages. A few centuries later—the date is indeterminate but it is possibly ca. 500—the Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan, a vast secondary expansion of that same tractate, endowed those anonymous names with flesh-and-blood-form, recasting the tractate by adding a sizable number of narratives. The authorship of the Mishnah-tractate, the Fathers, presented its teachings in the form of aphorisms, rarely finding it necessary to supply those aphorisms with a narrative setting, and never resorting to narrative for the presentation of its propositions. The testamentary authorship, The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan, provided an amplification and supplement to The Fathers and introduced into its treatment of the received tractate a vast corpus of narratives of various sorts. In this way, the later authorship indicated that it found in narrative in general, and stories about sages in particular, modes of discourse for presenting its message that the earlier authorship did not utilize. And the choice of the medium bore implicit meanings, also, for the message that would emerge in the later restatement of the received tractate.

The work of The Fathers according to Rabbi Nathan was defined by the fact that the authorship of The Fathers presented the message of sages solely in aphoristic form.

Apophthegms bore the entire weight of that authorship's propositions, and—quite consistently—what made one saying cogent with others fore and aft was solely the position of the authority behind that saying: here, not there. The framers of the successor writing vastly augmented The Fathers by recasting aphorisms in narrative form, and, more important, according to the names of sages listed in the prior writing the rudiments of biography.

Among the types of narrative (in a moment defined in detail in our treatment of the teleological logic of coherent discourse that prevails) we find in The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan, precedent, precipitant, parable, and story (whether an expansion of one that was scriptural or one that concerned sages), three have no counterpart in The Fathers, and therein lies the definition, as a talmud, of The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan. The authorship of the Fathers completely neglected three. The authorship of The Fathers fully acknowledged the importance of the past, referring to historical events of Scripture. But they did not retell and include in their composition the scriptural stories of what had happened long ago. They understood that their predecessors lived exemplary lives. But they did not narrate stories about sages. They had every reason to appreciate the power of parable. But they did not think it necessary to harness that power for delivering their particular message, or even for stating in colorful ways the propositions they wished to impart. The framers of The Fathers resorted to narrative, but only to serve as a precipitant, with great economy to describe the setting in which a stunning saying was set forth. They did not cite narratives in the form of precedents.

Given a saying of an apophthegmatic character, whether or not that saying is drawn from The Fathers, the authorship of the Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan will do one of the following:

[1] give a secondary expansion, including an exemplification, of the wise saying at hand;
[2] cite a proof-text of Scripture in that same connection;
[3] provide a parable to illustrate the wise saying (as often as not instead of the proof-text).

These three exercises in the structuring of their document—selecting materials and organizing them in a systematic way—the authors of The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan learned from the framers of The Fathers. In addition they contributed two further principles of structuring their document:

[4] add a sizable composition of materials that intersect with the foregoing, either by amplifying on the proof-text without regard to the wise saying served by the proof-text, or by enriching discourse on a topic introduced in connection with the base-saying;
[5] tack on a protracted story of a sage and what he said and did, which story may or may not exemplify the teaching of the apophthegm at hand.

The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan presents two types of materials and sets them forth in a fixed order. The document contains amplifications of sayings in The Fathers as well as materials not related to anything in the original document. The order in which The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan arranges its types of material becomes immediately clear. First that authorship presents amplifications of the prior document, and, only second does it tack on its own message. The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan first of all presents itself as continuous with the prior document, and then shows itself to be connected to it. That is the strategy of both Talmuds in connecting with the Mishnah. And where the authorship gives us compositions that are essentially new in rhetoric, logic and topic, it is in that second set of materials that we find what is fresh. Let me spell out matters as they will soon become clear. Where the authorship of the later document has chosen [1] to cite and amplify sayings in the earlier one, that exercise comes first. There may be additional amplification, and what appears to augment often turns out to be quite new and to enter the second of our two categories, in the form of proof-texts drawn from Scripture, or parables, other sorts of stories, sometimes involving

named sages, that illustrate the same point, and sequences of unadorned sayings, not in The Fathers, that make the same point. These come later in a sequence of discourses in The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan. Where an appendix of secondary materials on a theme introduced in the primary discourse occurs, it will be inserted directly after the point at which said theme is located in the counterpart, in the later document, to that passage in the earlier one, and only afterward will the exposition of the saying in The Fathers proceed to a further point. This general order predominates throughout.

The authorship of The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan clearly found inadequate the mode of intelligible discourse and the medium of expression selected by the framers of the document they chose to extend. The later writers possessed a message they deemed integral to the unfolding Torah of Moses at Sinai. They resorted to a mode of intelligible discourse, narrative, that conveyed propositions with great clarity, deeming the medium—again, narrative—a vehicle for conveying propositions from heart to heart. Not only so, but among the narratives utilized in their composition, they selected one for closest attention and narrative development. The sage-story took pride of place in its paramount position in The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan, and that same sub-classification of narrative bore messages conveyed, in the document before us, in no other medium. The framers made ample use of formerly neglected matters of intellect, aesthetics, and theology, specifically, to compose their ideas through a mode of thought and cogent thought, so as to construct intelligible discourse through a medium, meant to speak with immediacy and power to convey a message of critical urgency.

Accordingly, they found place for all four types of narrative, and, of greatest interest, they made use of the sage-story to convey powerful propositions lacking all precedent in The Fathers and, in context, therefore of an utterly fresh order. That they made the shift from a document that articulated propositions principally through aphorisms to one that made points through narrative and particularly through sage-stories is entirely clear. Three traits define the sage-story in this document.

> [1] the story about a sage has a beginning, middle, and end, and the story about a sage also rests not only on verbal exchanges ("he said to him . . ., he said to him . . ."), but on (described) action.
> [2] the story about a sage unfolds from a point of tension and conflict to a clear resolution and remission of the conflict.
> [3] the story about a sage rarely invokes a verse of Scripture and never serves to prove a proposition concerning the meaning of a verse of Scripture.

What about Scripture-stories? The traits of stories about scriptural figures and themes prove opposite:

> [1] in the story about a scriptural hero there is no beginning, middle, and end, and little action. The burden of the narrative is carried by "he said to him . . ., he said to him. . . ." Described action is rare and plays slight role in the unfolding of the narrative. Often the narrative consists of little more than a setting for a saying, and the point of the narrative is conveyed not through what is told but through the cited saying.
> [2] the story about a scriptural hero is worked out as a tableau, with description of the components of the stationary tableau placed at the center. There is little movement, no point of tension that is resolved.
> [3] the story about a scriptural hero always invokes verses from Scripture and makes the imputation of meaning to those verses the center of interest.

So the Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan systematically enriches The Fathers with a variety of narratives, each with its own conventions. When the narrators wish to talk about sages, they invoked one set of narrative conventions, deemed appropriate to that topic, and when they turned to make up stories about scriptural heroes and topics, they appealed to quite different narrative conventions.

The topical program of The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan in particular emerges only in identifying topics treated in the successor-compilations but not in the principal one. Points of emphasis in The Fathers lacking all counterpart in restatement

and development in the Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan are three. First, the study of the Torah alone does not suffice. One has also to make an honest living through work. In what is peculiar to The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan we find not that point but its opposite: one should study the Torah and other things will take care of themselves—a claim of a more supernatural character than the one in The Fathers. A second point of clear interest in the earlier document to which, in the later one, we find no response tells sages to accommodate their wishes to those of the community at large, to accept the importance of the government, to work in community, to practice self-abnegation and restraint in favor of the wishes of others. The sage here is less a supernatural figure than a political leader, eager to conciliate and reconcile the other. The third and most important, indicative shift in the later document imparts to the teleological question an eschatological answer altogether lacking in the earlier one.

If we were to ask the authorship of Abot to spell out their teleology, they would draw our attention to the numerous sayings about this life's being a time of preparation for the life of the world to come, on the one side, and to judgment and eternal life, on the other. The focus is on the individual and how he or she lives in this world and prepares for the next. The category is the individual, and, commonly in the two documents before us when we speak of the individual, we also tend to find the language of "this world" and "the world to come," *olam hazzeh, olam habba*. The sequence of sayings about this world and the next form a stunning contrast to the ones about this *age* and the next age, *olam hazzeh, le'atid labo*. In general, though not invariably, the shift in language draws in its wake a shift in social category, from individual to social entity or group, nation, or people. The word "*olam*" bears two meanings, "world," and "age." In context, when we find the word bearing the sense of "world," the category under discussion is the private person, and where the required sense, in English, is "age," then—as a rough rule of thumb—what is promised is for the nation.

We can tell that the definitive category is social, therefore national, when at stake is the fate not of the private person but of holy Israel. The concern then is what will happen to the nation in time to come, meaning the coming age, not the coming life of the resurrection. The systemic teleology shifts its focus to the holy people, and, alongside, to the national history of the holy people—now and in the age to come. So in the movement from *this world* and *the world to come*, to *this age* and *the age to come*, often expressed as *the coming future, le'atid labo*, we note an accompanying categorical shift in the definitive context: from individual and private life of home and family, to society and historical, public life. That shift then characterizes the teleological movement as much as the categorical change. It is contained both in general and in detail in the differences we have noticed between The Fathers and The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan.

The national-eschatological interest of the later document, with its focus on living only in the Land of Israel, on the one side, and its contrast between this age, possessed by the gentiles, and the age to come, in which redeemed Israel will enjoy a paramount position, which has no counterpart in the earlier composition, emerges not only in sayings but also in stories about the critical issue, the destruction of Jerusalem and the loss of the Temple, along with the concomitant matter, associated with the former stories, about repentance and how it is achieved at this time.

Yet a further point of development lies in the notion that study of the Torah combined with various virtues, e.g., good deeds, fear of sin, suffices, with a concomitant assurance that making a living no longer matters. Here too the new medium of the later document—the stories about sages—bears the new message. For that conviction emerges not only explicitly, e.g., in the sayings of Hananiah about the power of Torah-study to take away many sources of suffering, Judah b. Ilai's that one should treat words

of the Torah as the principal, earning a living as trivial, and so on, but also in the detail that both Aqiba and Eliezer began poor but through their mastery of Torah ended rich.

The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan differs from The Fathers in one aspect so fundamental as to change the face of the base-document completely. While the earlier authorship took slight interest in lives and deeds of sages, the later one contributed in a systematic and orderly manner the color and life of biography to the named but faceless sages of The Fathers. The stories about sages make points that correspond to positions taken in statements of viewpoints peculiar to The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan. The Fathers presents an ideal of the sage as model for the everyday life of the individual, who must study the Torah and also work, and through the good life prepare now for life after death, while The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan has a different conception of the sage, of the value and meaning of the study of the Torah, and of the center of interest—and also has selected a new medium for the expression of its distinctive conception. To spell this out:

[1] the sage is now—in the Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan—not a judge and teacher alone but also a supernatural figure.
[2] Study of the Torah in preference to making a living promises freedom from the conditions of natural life.
[3] Israel as the holy people seen as a supernatural social entity takes center-stage.

And these innovative points are conveyed not only in sayings but in stories about sages.

What follows is that the medium not only carries a new message but also forms a component of that new message. The sage as a supernatural figure now presents Torah-teachings through what he does, not only through what he says. Therefore telling stories about what sages did and the circumstances in which they made their sayings forms part of the Torah, in a way in which, in the earlier document, it clearly did not. The interest in stories about sages proves therefore not merely literary or formal; it is more than a new way of conveying an old message. Stories about the sages are told because sages stand for a message that can emerge only in stories and not in sayings alone. So we turn to a close reading of the stories themselves to review that message and find out why through stories in particular the message now emerges. For what we see is nothing short of a new mode of revelation, that is, of conveying and imparting God's will in the Torah.

People told stories because they wanted to think about history, and, in their setting, history emerged in an account of what happened, with an implicit message of the meaning of events conveyed in the story as well. They further conceived of the social entity, Israel, as an extended family, children of a single progenitor, Abraham, with his son and grandson, Isaac and Jacob. Consequently, when they told stories, they centered on family history. That accounts in general for the details of what the authorship of The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan have chosen to add to the topical program of The Fathers. The sage in the system of The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan constituted the supernatural father, who replaced the natural one; events in the life of the sage constituted happenings in the history of the family-nation, Israel. So history blended with family, and family with Torah-study. The national, salvific history of the nation-family, Israel, took place in such events as the origins of the sage, i.e., his beginnings in Torah-study; the sagacity of the sage, the counterpart to what we should call social history; the doings of the sage in great turnings in the family's history, including, especially, the destruction of the Temple, now perceived as final and decisive; and the death of the sage, while engaged in Torah-study. And these form the four classifications of story in this document.

Jacob Neusner

Rabbinic Judaism, Social Teaching of

Israel forms God's kingdom on earth. Israelites in reciting the Shema ("Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One") accept the yoke of the kingdom of heaven and the yoke of the commandments, twice daily. That liturgical premise comes to realization throughout diverse halakhic formations. The basic theological conception concerning the kingdom of heaven is familiar and common to a number of Judaic religious systems, not only the Rabbinic. But for Rabbinic Judaism to be "Israel" means to live in God's kingdom, under God's rule, in a very particular way. It is the way that is set forth in the Torah, the written part as mediated by the oral part ultimately transcribed in the Mishnah-Tosefta-Yerushalmi-Bavli and related external traditions. That imperative addresses not individuals alone or mainly but, rather, corporate Israel, that is, the entire social order. It encompasses not merely feelings or attitudes but registers in the here of tangible transactions and the now of workaday engagements, not only in some distant time. The entire system of the halakhah of Rabbinic Judaism constitutes a practical response to Scripture's pronouncement: "You [plural] shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy" (Lev. 19:2). The halakhah in well-crafted, cogent category-formations spells out in vast detail what it means to form an abode for the indwelling God, creator of heaven and earth.

In the halakhic system, these theological affirmations, realized in practical law, make a tangible, palpable difference in the affairs of ordinary Israelites. We must therefore ask how a system for the social order, in very practical terms of conduct, not merely spiritual terms of aspiration, can accommodate the presence and intervention of God. That is a question especially because the very essence of a social order is regularity, order, proportion, stability, and certain reliability. God's sentient, effective presence, from beyond corporate Israel, then intervenes and interferes in that otherwise steady structure: charisma breaking into routine, so to speak.

The social teaching of Rabbinic Judaism takes up the narrative of the Torah and recasts it into an account of the norms of Israel's social order. Its recapitulation of the Torah's story regulates relationships between Israelites and corporate Israel, among Israelites in their units of propagation and production, and between corporate Israel and the ever-present, always-sentient God. The details coalesce to yield a clear picture of an entire social order, its relationships and its points of stability and order. To treat any detail apart from its larger context is to miss its point. That point is, Rabbinic Judaism undertakes to realize in the everyday and here and now of the Jews' communal existence the imperatives set forth in the Torah for the formation of God's abode on earth.

The Three Social Teachings of Rabbinic Judaism

Judaism sets forth three principal social teachings, which encompass the social thought of Rabbinic Judaism as categorically embodied by the halakhah in norms of public conduct. They concern the principal parts of the social order, in secular language, how they are defined, how they function, how they relate and cohere. These are as follows:

(1) the society viewed whole and in its constituents;
(2) the relationships within the society between its principal parts; and
(3) the setting of the society in the larger context of cosmos and history.

So we ask about how the social teachings afford recognition to the individual within the corporate society; how they mediate conflict between the smallest whole categorical aggregates of the Israelite social order; and how they embody the social results and effects of the conviction that God is everywhere present within Israelite society, through all of its transactions. Rules embody doctrines that hold together in topic and in proposition and in generative

conception. In secular terms, that yields sociology, politics, and culture. But this is no secular system.

Important components of the halakhah viewed within the halakhic native categories contain the design of the relationships of individual to community, among the smallest social aggregates of that society; the Israelite households, among the intermediate aggregates; and between the entirety of corporate Israel and every Israelite, all together and one by one, and the ever-present God, for the largest. These three groups of native category-formations define the program. They supply its contents. They form the three teachings of Rabbinic Judaism about Israel's social order. It is a holy order, where the ubiquitous, commanding God enforces, but also is bound by, the rules he has given to shape that order. Marked by regularity and reliability, it is a society of proportion and order. It restores and maintains the stability of society partly through balances effected by humans, partly through interventions on the part of God. And it is a society so constructed as to afford a place worthy of God's perpetual presence. It aims at constructing out of Israelite society a suitable abode for God.

Genesis Rabbah I:1 teaches that God looked into the Torah and created the world in accord with the design found there. The Rabbinic sages looked into the Torah and created Israel as defined by the social teaching of Rabbinic Judaism. God's was a creative reading, and so was theirs.

Corporate Israel and the Individual Israelite: The Individual Finds Being Within Corporate Israel, a Whole that Exceeds the Sum of the Parts

Rabbinic Judaism places corporate Israel at the apex of world and social order. It is a unique social entity, because it forms a society that, as a whole, bears moral responsibility before God for its condition and conduct. No other social entity ("nation," "people") compares. That is because Israel assembled collectively at Sinai and stated unanimously, in one voice, in response to God's self-manifestation in the Torah given by God to Moses, "We shall do and we shall obey." Individuals in that context are responsible for their own actions, but also for those of the community, Israel. And the entire community bears responsibility for the conduct of everyone in its midst. That is what defines its character as a moral actor, a moral entity without counterpart in humanity. That is why corporate Israel forms a whole that exceeds the sum of the parts. The parts, the individuals, attain individuation only on the terms dictated by the whole, "all Israel" viewed from God's perspective. Israel defines God's stake in humanity, as Scripture's narrative makes clear.

To corporate Israel the individual Israelite is subordinated. That is for taxic reasons to begin with: the one is a genus and unique, the other is a species of a genus. Thus in the hierarchical classification of the social order, the community of Israel is primary and autonomous, the individual Israelite secondary and contingent. Addressing the priority of corporate Israel over the individual Israelite, Rabbinic Judaism must mediate between the conflicting claims of community upon individuality. When, specifically, the individual's interests intersect with those of corporate Israel, the halakhah teaches that those of corporate Israel take priority. That accounts for the manifest policy that favors communitarian theories of stipulative proprietorship over absolute ownership. But the priority of corporate Israel, expressed in the imposition of heavy sanctions on the aberrant individual, requires explanation in its own terms. At just what turnings, for precisely what considerations, does corporate Israel find itself empowered to impose the interests of the community on the individual Israelite? The social teaching of Rabbinic Judaism evinces tolerance of individual deviation from the norm. But determinate considerations motivate the social order to intervene and sanction individual aberration.

Framing matters in this way—when the community imposes its collective will upon the individual, when not—does not mean to suggest that the system even acknowledges, let alone undertakes to resolve, tension between the individual and community. It does not address the matter in our terms.

At issue for systemic construction is not finding a balance between the Israelite as an autonomous component of the social order and corporate Israel. The social teaching of Rabbinic Judaism does not recognize the radically isolated, autonomous individual, alone before God. It is, rather, articulating the hierarchical classification that places corporate Israel at the top, the individual Israelite beneath. For—as the matter of required martyrdom to avoid the public profanation of God's name indicates—no negotiation is possible when it comes to realizing the Torah's ultimate imperative for corporate Israel. The individual Israelite, whether by choice or by birth, never can claim utter personal autonomy, only limited individuality. He has no options in the Torah but to obey or to rebel. While the social policy recognizes and values the Israelite's individuality, embodying as it does the freedom of will and the free exercise of intentionality with which everyone by nature, at creation, is endowed, the Israelite subordinates his individuality to his place within corporate Israel. To revert to the formula at the head of this sub-division: the whole not only imparts its imprint upon the parts, the whole also exceeds the sum of the parts.

Between Israelites: Relationships of Balance and Stasis are to be Restored and Maintained

The second teaching concerns resolving conflict within Israel in particular. "Israel in particular" refers to conflict defined in the context of corporate Israel: its public life and activities. At issue in that context is the social order that the halakhic system conceives corporate Israel to constitute. When, therefore, in the setting of the resolution of conflict we speak of "Israel in particular," that does not mean, the happenstance that two or more Jews (whether or not deemed "Israel" by the halakhah) come into conflict. Nor does that refer to two or more Israelites in random encounters, that is, episodic narratives of contention. To register, a conflict must be designated for conflict-resolution within the categorical-structure of the halakhic system. So at issue are two Israelites in conflict that the Halakhah deems of systemic interest, a conflict for which the halakhah legislates.

Only those conflicts between two, or among three or more, Israelites that engage the interests of corporate Israel define the principal parts of the halakhic categorical structure encompassing conflict-resolution. Other conflicts receive episodic attention to be sure, but that is ordinarily tangential to the main concern. It is not categorical, not comprehensive. Specifically, those conflicts in which corporate Israel recognizes no public interest—no pertinence to the commonwealth—gain only routine attention. They come to resolution, within the halakhah, in ordinary ways. This will happen by, e.g., invoking considerations merely of generic fairness or equity. They generate the amplification of no principal category-formations. Where equity, fairness, and similar universals define outcomes without the intervention of the distinctive considerations attendant upon the participation of corporate Israel, there the system speaks in banalities. Then the differentiation between Israelite and gentile prove a systemic anomaly: a distinction where there is no important difference.

The disputes that register are those between families or households; these are the social units conflict between which is resolved in the categorical formations of the halakhah. The halakhah elaborately explores the contentious relationships between husband and wife or co-wives or mothers-in-law and daughters in law (in Tractates Ketubot, Sotah, Qiddushin, Gittin, and Yebamot for example!)—but not between brother and sister, except as to estates. The latter's relationships, furthermore, do not define, but are subordinate and tangential to, the context in which they occur. They have to do with mainly the administration of estates and support of orphans. But the former—relationships between husband and wife—define their own categorical context(s). And these are elaborate, betrothals, marital relationships of property and personalty (wealth in the form of persons), and cessation of marriage through death or divorce, for example. But even here, the possibilities—issues that can have arisen in imagination—are vastly outweighed by the actualities—the

problems that do predominate for exegetical attention.

Providing for the stability of the household as the building block of the social order, the halakhah identifies those conflicts between, e.g., husband and wife, that demand attention. The halakhic category-formations as these are unpacked will define what is important about them, and will resolve matters in a way that is not only just and equitable, but that is systemically required and particular. The conception of justice and equity figures so far as it illuminates the systemic logic embodied, here as elsewhere, in the details. Then justice and equity give way, being too general to solve many critical problems.

We recall, in this connection, the critical position in the social order assigned to oaths, which invoke God's name and presence (not to be confused with vows). Oaths, in four classifications but for a single purpose, represent exceptional media for the resolution of social conflict. The oath of the judges, the oath of testimony, and the oath of bailment all serve to introduce the criterion of truth and to exclude the exercise of force. The claimant seeks a just restoration of his property or compensation for his loss, the defendant insists upon a fair adjudication of the matter. For that purpose, words backed up not by deeds but by divine supervision serves. But contention precipitates also the remaining classes of oaths: the taking of the vain and rash oath. The rash oath involves securing credence for a preposterous allegation—one that others deny. The vain oath asks people to believe one will carry out an implausible resolve, again bearing within itself the implicit motive to secure credibility where there is none. So one way or another, the oath serves, within the Israelite polity, to engage God's participation within the transactions of man, to involve God in Israel's points of inner conflict, to ask God to impart certainty to the points of stress and strain.

The upshot is readily apparent. It is God who keeps Israel's peace. That statement should be understood in concrete, not intangible ("spiritual") terms. The concrete fact emerges from the approach to resolving conflict between Israel's families and households. Heaven's heavy stake in family ties, God's engagement in securing truth-telling in response to the invocation of his name—these form the foundations of Judaism's theory of the social order, its social teaching. That is not always a paramount consideration, but it is everywhere potentially present. True, conflicts that pertain to restoring and maintaining the social order come to resolution within the this-worldly media of Israelite society in all but the single instance of oaths. But that instance tells the tale. The critical teaching of the social order is God intervenes in transactions that, in all other aspects, are guided by this-worldly rules and exchanges. That is because God is explicitly called to attest to the truth. Everywhere present, God knows the facts and "will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain" by swearing to the contrary. On what basis does the halakhic system of Israel's social order confidently call upon God to resolve Israelites' own conflicts? The written Torah answers that question, specifying the character of oaths in God's name and where they pertain.

God's Presence in Israel: Israel Lives in God's Ubiquitous Presence, Subject to God's Enduring Concern

Oaths form the bridge to the third and final social teaching of Rabbinic Judaism, that Israel is to form a society worthy of God's presence. A simple fact established in Scripture and instantiated in the halakhic system captures the palpability, the practicality, the physicality, of God's presence. Settling conflicts over ownership of a cloak or a plot of ground or an ox between Israelite householders under some circumstances requires God's direct intervention. A formula, the oath, invokes God's presence and settles the conflict over the cloak, land, or animal. That fact signals the fundamental social reality contemplated by Rabbinic Judaism: a social order in which God is ever engaged and everywhere present. As with the oath, so with much else, God dwells in the people of Israel. God's active presence affects time and space and brings about Israel's engagement both in Israel's households and

in God's House. That statement represents not a theological conviction alone. It also sets forth the principle of social organization that is outlined in Scripture's laws and realized and systematized in the Rabbinic halakhah.

What, precisely, does God's active presence mean in the system of the social order put forth by the Halakhah? The question divides into these principal parts:

(1) Where—locatively—does God's presence take effect?
(2) When—temporally—does God take place?
(3) Under what circumstance—occasionally—does God enter into the social order formed by corporate Israel, by its households, and, at the end, by even its individual participants?

The answers to these question then take the measure of God's presence within Israel's social order:

(1) location or space,
(2) occasion or time, and
(3) circumstance or transaction—hence the divisions of this part of the project.

In all these aspects of public life—time, space, circumstance—God plays a principal part. That presence—"residence" would be a more likely word—produces immediate and tangible results. To state the matter in negative terms: corporate Israel's social order cannot, and does not, function beyond the ken and concern of God in the here and now. That is categorically not a mere theological conviction, a colorful way of expressing an immanentalist doctrine concerning things spiritual. True, it represents an accurate description of the theological apologetics of the halakhah: it derives from the Torah revealed by God to Moses at Sinai, so the halakhah in general terms certainly represents God's will. But the argument here concerns not apologetics for a legal system viewed in general terms.

But God has given the rules that render his presence not disruptive but the opposite: reliable and predictable. God in Rabbinic Judaism cannot be characterized as "mysterium tremendum," intervening unpredictably and disruptively. On the contrary, the halakhah orders and regularizes relationships with him who says, "Your thoughts are not my thoughts." With the Torah, God has made his thoughts accessible. Knowing the rules, Israel is able to think like God and abide confidently in God's presence. So even in matters of sanctification, for example, of time and space and circumstance, rationality governs. That is the gift of the halakhah. And that fact points to the question raised in an account of the social teaching of Rabbinic Judaism: how does the halakhah embody in social norms the reality of God's presence in Israel's social order? The answer is, by revealing in the Torah the governing principles of Israel's sanctification, God has laid the foundations for Eden: an Israelite social order that is perfect and eternal.

To state the whole at the outset: the social theory of Rabbinic Judaism sees God and Israel as enlandised, their relationship as a function of location. By "enlandisement," is meant the acts of relationship between Israel and God that take place in, and that are realized through, the situation of holy Israel within the actuality of the land of Israel. The presence of Israel upon the land affects the character of the land. That presence affects, also, the character of Israel's social order, and, as Scripture makes clear, the consequence for that social order, as to the future, of Israel's conduct. That explains why the union of Israel with the land imposes upon Israel occasions for a relationship with God that absence of Israel from the land prevents. How Israel conducts its activities in the land shapes Israel's relationship with God. And what matters then concerns how Israel cultivates the land, deriving its life from the land. God's presence among Israel in the land permits no alternative.

Israel conditionally got, through sin lost, and by repentance regained, the land: how many times more? Here the stabilizing power of the Torah and the sages' transformation of its cases into principles come to the fore. Moses has already stated the conditions for an enduring social order in the land. Israel's possession of the land is subject to the conditions of the covenant. So Israel's rendering to God what God requires as his share of the produce forms a principal expression

of Israel's covenanted relationship with God, which takes place not only in, but also through, the land. With God as landlord, Israel's social order takes shape in the land held by Israel in the status of the share-cropper. Transactions in scarce resources—land, produce—are defined in part by the intervention of God's claim, in addition to the claims of the this-worldly participants.

God's presence in heaven as on earth shapes not only Israel's space but also marks its division of time. One day, one occasion is differentiated from another by reason of actions God has taken, and the media of differentiation extend deep into the Israelite household. Specifically, the rhythms of life lived in correlation with the movement of certain natural bodies—the moon's months, the sun's seasons—respond to God's imperatives for occasions defined by the positioning of those bodies in the Heavens. Days, weeks, lunar months, solar seasons—all bring along their particular imperatives. That is what is meant by finding God's presence in Israel not only in space but in time.

The meeting of Israel and God is both locative, focused as it is on the Temple, and utopian, taking place in Israelite households where they are situated. And, as a matter of fact, those very moments that find God welcoming Israel in that one place, the Temple, mark the time at which Israel in its households receives God. So encountering God *when*—not solely where—God may be found, the Israelite household matches God's House. The occasion of the arrangement of moon and solar seasons is matched by the earthly response: Israel's house is brought into alignment with God's. So eternal Israel on earth corresponds with the eternal movement of the moon and the solar seasons in heaven, world without end. That is what the halakhah brings into being: the realization of God's kingdom.

Rabbinic Social Teaching in Israelite Context

With this summary in hand, it is time to seek perspective. How do the Rabbinic sages see the social entity, Israel, that they propose through the halakhic norms to bring into being? The Rabbinic sages in their systematic halakhic writings rework the Torah's narrative into the norms of the Israelite social order. And no other encounter with those Israelite Scriptures so accurately and authentically retold the Pentateuchal story of Israel.

Social teachings of Rabbinic Judaism convey a vision of society seen whole but also embodied in detail. They take the form of both constitutive principles for the design of a social order and casuistic instruction on public virtue of a personal sort. Encompassed are both social thought on a grand scale, on the one side, and moral theology or ethics on the other. "You [plural] shall be holy" (Lev. 19:2) addresses the entirety of society, "Love [imperative, singular] your neighbor as yourself [singular you]" (Lev. 19:18), the individual and the occasion. The former—using the plural "you" of the Hebrew—addresses the social order, the latter—with the singular "you"—the personal attitude and condition. Teachings of a public, social character speak to the community as a working system, encompassing its parts. Those that concern social behavior, theological ethics, moral theology, and the like do not convey a vision of the whole. And the corpus of details holds together. Corporate Israel was the question, the individual Israelite was the given within the narrative of the Rabbinic construction of the Israelite social order. That is, if, like the rest of humanity, individuals are responsible to God for their actions and attitudes, why should corporate Israel form a moral entity encompassing all Israelites and making each responsible for the actions and attitudes of all?

We have, then, to wonder whence the conception of corporate Israel as a moral actor. Why should the Rabbinic sages have constructed out of the detailed laws of ancient Israelite Scripture, such as they cite start to finish, so magnificent vision of an entire society? My view is, they learned from the Torah of Our Rabbi, Moses. Specifically, Scripture itself provokes such a mode of thinking about the whole of the social order, not only about the details, corporate conduct, not only private behavior.

It fosters the notion that the parts cohere, the details work together, above all, that the conduct of society as a whole shapes the fate of individuals therein, so that each is responsible for all, and all for each. Ancient Israelite society produced in the Pentateuch a remarkably coherent account of itself, its purpose and how through a narrative of the community's story the parts fit together to attain that purpose. Scripture, then, told a single, unitary, continuous story of itself and encompassed within that narrative the entire corpus of its laws of the social order. The Pentateuch speaks of Israel as a whole and tells the story of how its social order is to realize God's plan. Rabbinic Judaism systematically states the result of profound reflection on that story and the plan it conveys—that and the determination to act upon the implications of the story and its plan.

Now the continuity of this society, called "corporate Israel" to distinguish "Israel" as the people from "Israel" as the individual Israelite, is not taken for granted as a given. It is portrayed as subject to stipulations, as a conditional gift. Moses and the prophets explicitly take the condition of Israel's society as indicator of Israel's relationship with God, who expresses intense concern for that matter. That fact explains why the Rabbinic sages, in the tradition of Moses and the prophets, set forth doctrines of public policy, not merely private conduct, beginning, as we have seen, with an account of the entire society, Israel. Theirs was a vision of the whole, a perspective from afar and not only from nearby. That fact explains why this inquiry into their social teachings identifies issues of considerable dimensions. That conception, thinking about society as a whole, in its largest components, then defines what is at stake in the Judaic teaching of the social order as undertaken by the Rabbinic sages. That is, to derive from Scripture not only details but large conceptions of a social character, not only rules for the construction of that "Israel" that Moses is commanded to bring into being, but also the principles that those rules adumbrate for situations undreamed of by Moses.

Specific social problems, e.g., the economy and the rational disposition of scarce resources, politics and legitimate violence, patterns of proper relationships among persons or classes of persons represent details. They produce an anthology of rules and sayings on contemporary concerns. But the context of those details, which imparts order, proportion, and meaning to them, will not have emerged. And the outcome would have been an account of how *our* contemporary category-formations impose themselves on a corpus of sayings that, while topically pertinent, are seen out of their own categorical context. But it is only in categorical context that a corpus of teachings pertinent to the social order transforms itself into a coherent doctrine of the social order. And that is precisely what we have in the Rabbinic system of the halakhah by its category-formations.

Seen whole, not only in its categorical components, Judaism starts with the Hebrew Scriptures of ancient Israel. That is a judgment of the whole, not only of the parts, some of which commence in statements of Scripture, some of which do not. It is a vision of the whole of Scripture's account of Israel that infuses the halakhic system, not only the stimulus of elements of that account in detail. Among the Scriptures, the Pentateuch, with its narrative formulation of the coherent design for the social order of the entire Kingdom of priests and holy people, enjoys privileged standing. Within the Pentateuchal narrative and laws, sages found the imperative to define the entirety of a social order worthy to serve as God's abode. There they identified as the moral actor in God's drama not Adam, the individual, but Israel, the corporate social entity—whether a family, as in Genesis, whether a kingdom of priests and a whole people, as in Exodus, whether a pilgrim people engaged in a common enterprise and responsible for its own fate by reason of its covenant with God, in Deuteronomy.

That is why, following the example of Moses and building upon the revealed Scripture, the Rabbinic sages proposed to identify the rules implicit in Scripture's stories and case-law. They thought deeply about the details of the laws, amplifying and extending them by defining the principles of right action exemplified therein. But theirs,

then, was the task of global organization of the data, taken out of its narrative framework and placed into the systemic one of their own devising. So they made a unique contribution to the enterprise, in the definition of the large-scale category-formations that formed of stores and cases sustained and significant principles of an abstract character. The cases and rules of Scripture and tradition were treated as exemplary, surface-indicators of a deep structure of encompassing principles. Expressing the architecture through the detailed plan only, they set forth a system of law capable of imparting shape and structure anywhere, not bound to a particular culture or circumstance, time or place. And so it has worked out for Rabbinic Judaism for two millennia.

The upshot is clear. The social teachings form three large statements, spinning out the imperatives of a single logic. These statements in their necessary order speak, one on the social order formed by corporate Israel in its relationship to individual Israelites, the second on relationships between Israelites, and the third on relationships between Israel's society and the ever-present, ubiquitous one and only God who has taken up residence in the people, Israel. All three relationships—between Israel and the Israelite, Israelites by households or families, and all Israel and God—are defined by the pertinent category-formations of the normative halakhah.

JACOB NEUSNER

Rabbinic Literature, Logics of

THE word "logic" here stands for the determinative principle of intelligibility of discourse and cogency of thought. Logic is what tells people that one thing connects, or intersects, with another, while something else does not, hence, making connections between this and that, but not this and the other thing. And logic further tells people what follows from the connections they make, generating the conclusions they are to draw. Governing logic tells us what is thinkable and what is not, what can be said intelligibly and what cannot. Accordingly, the first thing we want to know about any piece of writing is its logic of cogent discourse. Logic is what joins one sentence to the next and forms the whole into paragraphs of meaning, intelligible propositions, each with its place and sense in a still larger, accessible system. And logic as a matter of fact makes possible the sharing of propositions of general intelligibility and therefore forms the cement of a whole literature, such as the Rabbinic canon of Judaism's formative age.

The matter of defining the governing logic bears more than formal consequence. It also introduces the social side of a literature. Specifically, because of shared logic, one mind connects to another, yielding self-evidence, so that, in writing or in orally formulated and orally transmitted teaching, public discourse becomes possible. Because of logic, debate on issues of general interest takes place. Still more to the point, because of logic a mere anthology of statements about a single subject becomes a composition of theorems about that subject, so that facts serve to demonstrate and convey propositions. Through logic, the parts, bits and pieces of information, add up to a sum greater than themselves, generate information or insight beyond what they contain. What people think—exegesis of discrete facts in accord with a fixed hermeneutic of the intellect—knows no limit. How they think makes all the difference. Since each of the documents of Rabbinic literature sets forth a cogent statement, a clear picture of the conventions of logic that permits cogent discourse is required.

Modes of patterned thought form propositions out of facts, turning information into knowledge, knowledge into a system of sense and explanation and therefore composing a shared structure of sensibility and meaning for the social order. The logic of coherent discourse exhibited by the writer of a given document is what tells people about how to make interesting connections between

one thing, one fact, for instance, and some other, therefore instructing them on what deserves notice, and what can be ignored. Every document in the Rabbinic literature selects a particular means of holding together two or more sentences and forming of them a coherent thought, that is to say, of making the whole more than the sum of the parts. There are, in fact, four such logics, three of them entirely familiar, one of them not.

First, let us consider a concrete example of how a logic of coherent discourse turns facts into propositions, information into truth. The simple sequence moves us from two unrelated facts to two connected facts and thence to a proposition. Here is one example of a possible logic of coherent discourse:

[1] I threw a rock at a dog. It rained.
[2] I threw a rock at a dog, then it rained.
[3] If I throw a rock at a dog, it will rain.

The first set of sentences contains no link, so no conclusions are to be drawn. No unstated premise tells me how the two sentences relate, or whether they relate at all. The second item presents a temporal, narrative link; this happened, then that happened. Conclusions may or may not be drawn. Two events are juxtaposed, but the "then" carries with it no judgment on causation or other modes of explanation, that is, of coherence between sentences. A narrative line extends from the former to the latter sentence. The third formulation of course establishes a conditional link between two facts, forming of them an allegation as to what will happen if one does such and so. The "if " of course may be replaced with a "since," and a variety of other joining language will establish a connection between the two sentences (or clauses of one sentence). The third case shows us how the sum of the whole exceeds the parts.

This simple set of sentences shows what I mean when I point out that some facts are inert, others bear consequence. Facts that fail to intersect with others in general gain slight notice; those that form structures and convey sense gain systematic consequence and ultimately form an encompassing account of how things are and should be, why we do things one way and not another: an ethos, an ethics, an account of a "we," altogether, a system. The convention of a shared logic of coherent discourse moreover explains to people about the consequences of the connections that they are taught to perceive, yielding conclusions of one sort, rather than another, based on one mode of drawing conclusions from the connections that are made, rather than some other.

Making connections and drawing conclusions represent abstractions. Let me give a concrete example of what is under discussion. It is, very simply, what constitutes the "and" and the "equals" of thought, e.g., in the sentence, "two and two equal four." The way in which people add up two and two to make four always requires the appeal to the *and*, and that is what endures, that *and* of the two and two equal four, and, too, the *equal*, which is to say, the conclusion yielded by the *and*. The logic lasts: the *and* of making connections, the *equal* of reaching conclusions. This endures: the certainty that—to shift the symbols that serve to clarify this simple point—X + Y are connected and generate conclusion Z, but that (for purposes of discussion here) the symbol # and the number 4 are not connected and therefore, set side by side, produce a mere nonsense-statement, e.g., # and 4 equal *. The conventions that govern thought and discourse permit us to make one such statement but not the other.

The Propositional Logic of Philosophical Discourse

Propositional and syllogistic logic is the most familiar to us in the West, and it also is the most commonplace in the Rabbinic literature, though the forms that convey the proposition or syllogism are unfamiliar to us. Philosophical discourse is built out of propositions and arguments from facts and reason. The cogency of discourse—the *and* that joins two sentences together into a cogent statement—derives from the argument we wish to make, the fact we wish to establish, the proposition we wish to prove. The tension in this mode of thought arises from the trait of mind that derives from two facts a third, one that transcends the givens. The resolution, then, comes from

the satisfying demonstration, out of what we know, of something we did not know but wish to find out, or of something we think we know and wish to prove.

The syllogistic character of philosophical discourse is familiar to us all. That is why commonplaces such as "[1] All Greeks are liars, [2] Demosthenes is a Greek, [3] (therefore) Demosthenes is a liar," need not detain us. In that sequence, fact [1] and fact [2] come together to prove a fact that is not contained within either [1] or [2]. Syllogistic logic yields a sum greater than the parts. From our perspective, we want to identify the connection between two facts. And what matters in the famous syllogism at hand is that proposition [3] is what joins fact [1] to fact [2] into joined and cogent sentences, that is, the *equal* generates the *and*. In the texts before us, the idiom is exceedingly odd, which makes all the more valuable the exemplification of what is, in fact, a perfectly routine mode of thought. For the issue at hand is one of connection, the *and* of the *two and two*, that is, not of fact (such as is conveyed by the statement of the meaning of a verse or a clause of a verse) but of the relationship between one fact and another. And at stake in the connection is the proposition, the *equal* of the *two and two* equal *four*.

The critical point is in the *equals*, since it is at that result that the point of the connection is both realized but also established. We see a connection between one item and the next because of the third item that the first two generate. In the logic at hand, connection rests upon conclusion. And let me with emphasis state the central point: *that relationship, connection, is shown in a conclusion different from the established facts of two or more sentences that we propose to draw when we set up as a sequence two or more facts and claim out of that sequence to propose a proposition different from, transcending, the facts at hand.*

We demonstrate propositions in a variety of ways, appealing to both a repertoire of probative facts and also a set of accepted modes of argument. In this way we engage in a kind of discourse that gains its logic from what, in general, we may call philosophy: the rigorous analysis and testing of propositions against the canons of an accepted reason. The connection produced by the cogent discourse of philosophy therefore accomplishes the miracle of making the whole more—or less—than the sum of the parts, that is, in the simple language we have used up to now, showing the connections between fact 1 and fact 2, in such wise as to yield proposition A.

Before we move to our concrete example, let me introduce a secondary, but, in our context, important, alternative way for conducting philosophical argument—a way at the foundation of all scientific inquiry. It is the demonstration we know, in general, as comparison and contrast, the search for the rules that express the order and sense of diverse facts. We seek to identify what discrete facts have in common and thereby to state the rule common to them all, e.g., to identify a genus, then its species, and on downward. The fundamental logic of cogency here is simple: something is like something else, therefore it follows the rule of that something else; or it is unlike that something else, therefore it follows the opposite of the rule governing that something else. The way in which the result is presented tells us the principle of cogency. When we classify, we identify a genus and its species and lay them forth in their nomothetic system. The layout often takes the form of a list. The logic before us on that account is called the science of making lists, that is, *Listenwissenschaft*, a way to classify and so establish a set of probative facts, which compel us to reach a given conclusion.

These probative facts may derive from the classification of data, all of which point in one direction and not in another. A catalogue of facts, for example, may be so composed that, through the regularities and indicative traits of the entries, the catalogue yields a proposition. A list of parallel items all together point to a simple conclusion; the conclusion may or may not be given at the end of the catalogue, but the catalogue—by definition—is pointed. All of the catalogued facts are taken to bear self-evident connections to one another, established by those pertinent shared traits implicit in the composition of the list, therefore also bearing meaning and pointing through the weight of evidence to an inescapable conclusion.

The discrete facts then join together because of some trait common to them all. This is a mode of classification of facts to lead to an identification of what the facts have in common and—it goes without saying—an explanation of their meaning. These and other modes of philosophical argument are entirely familiar to us all. In calling all of them "philosophical," I mean only to distinguish them from the other three logics we shall presently examine.

The first document to yield a concrete example for our purposes is not in a readily accessible form, e.g., a propositional argument or a list; it is not an essay or a well-composed philosophical argument, but rather a document in the form of a commentary. The choice of this rather odd way of setting forth a proposition, of joining two facts into a cogent statement or linking two sentences into a paragraph (in literary terms) is critical to my argument. For I maintain that the form, commentary, bears no implications for the logic of discourse contained within that form. Arrangements of words by themselves tell us little about the logic that operates therein. To demonstrate the irrelevance of mere form in the analysis of logic, I choose a commentary. In general, a commentary works its way through discrete entries and does not necessarily propose to prove large-scale propositions. On formal grounds, therefore, we should not anticipate a fine example of propositional argument to emerge from writing in such a form. But we now see that a commentary can put together facts into arguments and propositions, sentences into paragraphs, as much as an essay.

We turn to Sifre to Deuteronomy, a systematic commentary on much of the book of Deuteronomy. The pertinent verse is the following: "For the Lord will vindicate his people and repent himself [JPS: take revenge] for his servants, when he sees that their might is gone, and neither bond nor free is left" (Deut. 32:36). The proposition is not explicitly stated but it is repeatedly implied: when the Israelites are at the point of despair, then God will vindicate them. We shall now see a systematic demonstration of the proposition that, when things are at their worst and the full punishment impends, God relents and saves Israel. And what is critical is at the pivots and the joinings of sentences (Sifre to Deuteronomy CCXXVI:II.):

1.A. ". . . when he sees that their might is gone, and neither bond nor free is left:"
B. When he sees their destruction, on account of the captivity.
C. For all of them went off.

Let me make explicit, in terms of the first case, how I conceive the connections to be established, the conclusion to be drawn. A represents the conclusion, that is, the proposition to be proved. B, C present the facts that are connected. C is the first fact, namely, all of them went off into exile. B then is the second fact, that [1] when God saw that they had gone into captivity, and [2] were without arrogance or power, yielding the unstated conclusion, [3] he had mercy on them, and that then validates the proposition, A. Turned around, the second and third of the three sentences work together so as to make a point that neither one of them by itself establishes, and that is how such a syllogism works in general. Then a sequence of syllogisms of the same kind, not all of them fully spelled out and most of them as truncated is the first, make the same point, establishing the besought theorem by setting forth numerous demonstrations of that theorem: "When he sees. . . ."

2.A. Another teaching concerning the phrase, ". . . when he sees:"
B. When they despaired of redemption.
3.A. Another teaching concerning the phrase, ". . . when he sees [that their might is gone, and neither bond nor free is left:"
B. When he sees that the last penny is gone from the purse,
C. in line with this verse: "And when they have made an end of breaking in pieces the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished" (Dan. 12:7) [Hammer's translation].
4.A. Another teaching concerning the phrase, ". . . when he sees that their might is gone, and neither bond nor free is left:"
B. When he sees that among them there are no men who seek mercy for them as Moses had,
C. in line with this verse: "Therefore he said that he would destroy them, had

not Moses his chosen one stood before him in the breach" (Ps. 106:23). . . .
5.A. Another teaching concerning the phrase, ". . . when he sees that their might is gone, and neither bond nor free is left:"
B. When he sees that among there are no men who seek mercy for them as Aaron had,
C. in line with this verse: "And he stood between the dead and the living and the plague was stayed" (Num. 17:13).
6.A. Another teaching concerning the phrase, ". . . when he sees that their might is gone, and neither bond nor free is left:"
B. When he sees that there are no men who seek mercy for them as Phineas had,
C. in line with this verse: "Then stood up Phineas and wrought judgment and so the plague was stayed" (Ps. 106:30).

Despite the form of a commentary on a verse of Scripture, we assuredly can identify the regnant proposition, which, as a matter of fact, joins the individual facts into a cogent exercise of syllogistic proof.

Among the available means of linking sentence to sentence in paragraphs, the first, now amply exemplified, is to establish propositions that rest upon philosophical bases, e.g., through the proposal of a thesis and the composition of a list of facts that prove the thesis. This is to us an entirely familiar, western mode of scientific expression, that is, through the classification of data that, in a simple way, as we noted, is called the science of making lists (*Listenwissenschaft*). No philosopher in antiquity will have found unintelligible these types of units of thought, even though the source of facts in the present instance, Scripture, not established social norms or observations of nature, and the mode of appealing to facts, citations of Scripture, rather than allusions to generally prevailing patterns and norms, would have proved alien to such a philosopher. The connection, the process of thought—these seem to me entirely commonplace in the intellectual world at large.

The Teleological Logic of Narrative

In the teleological logic of connection-making and conclusion-drawing, the logic of coherence invokes a fictive tension and its resolution. It appeals for cogency to the purpose and direction of an arrangement of facts, ordinarily in the form of narrative. Teleological or narrative logic further serves quite effectively as a mode of making connections between two facts, that is, linking two otherwise unrelated sentences and presenting conclusions based on the linkage. In this mode of thought, we link fact to fact and also prove (ordinarily implicit) propositions by appeal to teleology, that is, the end or purpose of discussion that makes sense of all detail. The tension of narrative derives from the open-endedness of discourse. We are told a series of facts, or a problem is set forth, such that, only when we see in the sequence of the series of facts the logical, inevitable outcome do we find a resolution: that sense, that fittingness of connection, which makes of the parts a cogent whole. Accordingly, a proposition (whether or not it is stated explicitly) may be set forth and demonstrated by showing through the telling of a tale (of a variety of kinds, e.g., historical, fictional, parabolic, and the like) that a sequence of events, real or imagined, shows the ineluctable truth of a given proposition. Whence the connection? The logic of connection demonstrated through narrative, rather than philosophy, is simply stated. It is connection attained and explained by invoking some mode of narrative in which a sequence of events, first this, then that, is understood to yield a proposition, first this, then that—*because of this*. That manufactured sequence both states *and also establishes* a proposition in a way different from the philosophical and argumentative mode of propositional discourse.

Whether or not the generalization is stated in so many words rarely matters, because the power of well-crafted narrative is to make unnecessary an author's explicitly drawing the moral. Narrative sees cogency in the purpose and direction and of course outcome, appealing for its *therefore* to the necessary order of events understood as causative. That is then a logic or intelligibility of connection attained through teleology: the claim of goal or direction or purpose, *therefore* cause, commonly joining facts through the

fabric of a tale, presenting the *telos* in the garb of a story of what happened because it had to happen. Narrative-logic thus makes connections and draws conclusions and conveys a proposition through the setting forth of happenings in a framework of inevitability, in a sequence that makes a point, e.g., establishes not merely the facts of what happens, but the teleology that explains those facts. Then we speak not only of events—our naked facts—but of their relationship. We claim to account for that relationship teleologically, in the purposive sequence and necessary order of happenings. In due course we shall see how various kinds of narratives serve to convey highly intelligible and persuasive propositions.

For an example of narrative, I turn to another Rabbinic document, the Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan I:XIII. Here we have a parable that supplies a simple example of how narrative links fact to fact in cogent discourse and further conveys with powerful logic a clear proposition:

2.A. R. Simeon b. Yohai says, "I shall draw a parable for you." To what may the first man be compared? He was like a man who had a wife at home. What did that man do? He went and brought a jug and put in it a certain number of dates and nuts. He caught a scorpion and put it at the mouth of the jug and sealed it tightly. He left it in the corner of his house.

B. "He said to her, 'My daughter, [for husbands referred to wives as daughters], whatever I have in the house is entrusted to you, except for this jar, which under no circumstances should you touch.'" What did the woman do? When her husband went off to market, she went and opened the jug and put her hand in it, and the scorpion bit her, and she went and fell into bed. When her husband came home from the market, he said to her, 'What's going on?'

C. "She said to him, 'I put my hand into the jug, and a scorpion bit me, and now I'm dying.'

D. "He said to her, 'Didn't I tell you to begin with," "Whatever I have in the house is entrusted to you, except for this jar, which under no circumstances should you touch.'" He got mad at her and divorced her.

E. "So it was with the first man.

F. "When the Holy One, blessed be he, said to him, 'Of all the trees of the garden you certainly may eat, but from the tree of knowledge of good and evil you may not eat, for on the day on which you eat of it, you will surely die' (Gen. 2:17),

G. "on that day he was driven out, thereby illustrating the verse, 'Man does not lodge overnight in honor' (Ps. 49:24)."

Simeon's point is that by giving man the commandment, God aroused his interest in that tree and led man to do what he did. The explicit proposition is the first point, we sin on account of our obsession. The implicit proposition is that God bears a measure of guilt for the fall of humanity. The issue of connection should be made explicit. Let us consider the sequence of sentences of the opening unit:

1. A man had a wife at home
2. He went and brought a jug
3. . . . put in it a certain number of dates and nuts.
4. He caught a scorpion
5. . . . put it at the mouth of the jug
6. . . . sealed it tightly.
7. . . . He left it in the corner of his house.

Nos. 1, 2, 3, and 4 bear no connection whatsoever. Nos. 4–7, of course, form a single sentence, but that sentence on its own stands utterly unrelated to the earlier of the two sentences, Nos. 1–3. However, we realize, the sequence of clauses and sentences, all of them discrete, in fact form a tight fit, since they bear the burden of the narrative. At the end, then, the narrative reaches its point and, retrospectively, establishes a very close connection between clause and clause, sentence and sentence. It is the goal, the teleology, of the composition, that joins the components of the composition to one another, and that happens only at the end. Our trust in the narrator's purpose is what allows us to suspend our suspicion that we are linking things that stand out of all relationship with one another. The linkage imparted at the end then makes sense of everything from the outset, and that is what I mean by a logic of teleology, as distinct from propositional logic, which results in the making of connections and the drawing of conclusions.

The Non-Propositional Logic of Fixed Association

This brings us to an unfamiliar mode of establishing connections between sentences, which I call the logic of fixed association. Though difficult to define in familiar terms, it forms the critical and indicative logic of discourse of a variety of Rabbinic documents. It is a logic that to begin with bears a negative trait, in that in this logic we find connection *without* conclusion, that is, the *and* but not the *equals* or the *therefore*. In this logic, the two *and* the two do not *equals* anything. Then on what basis do we impute or introduce the *and* at all? The cogency of two or more facts is imputed and extrinsic. The *and* is not sensible, intrinsic, propositional, or purposive. But in Rabbinic literature, document after document appeals to precisely this logic of fixed association. Not only so, but even highly propositional compositions, of considerable dimensions, are linked together not syllogistically but solely through extrinsic, fixed association. It follows that writers of documents of Rabbinic literature do perceive cogency through fixed association without either syllogistic or even teleological proposition. That cogency, the connection lacking all proposition, derives from a sense of the order and proportion of data extrinsic to those at hand.

What effects connection in the logic of fixed association? Fixed associations derive from an extrinsic and conventional list of items deemed joined for reasons pertinent to those items. Then, each fact or sentence joined together fore and aft with others finds its own relationship to that extrinsic connection, without the slightest connection to other facts or sentences that stand, in writing or in mental sequence, in the same context, fore and aft. Discrete facts, propositions, or sentences hang together because they refer equally to an available protocol of associations. Hence it is a logic that rests upon conventional connections. It appeals, rather, to protocols—e.g., lists of things, a given text, a sequence of facts—that are known and familiar, rather than on logico-propositional connections that are unknown and subject to discovery. It is meaning imputed, not discovered. The contrast to the logic most familiar to us in the West is readily grasped. In philosophical logic we set up a sequence of two or more facts and claim out of that sequence to propose a proposition different from, transcending, the facts at hand. Here, by contrast, we join two or more facts or sentences without pretending that any proposition whatsoever is to be demonstrated. That is why the sequence that links in one composition sentence 1, then sentence 2, then sentence 3, though there is no propositional connection between 1 and 2 or 2 and 3, rests upon principles of intelligibility practically unknown to us. It is easy to find appropriate illustrations.

For an illustration, we return to an already familiar compilation. I give a sustained passage, a sequence of freestanding sentences, bearing no relationship, sequential let alone propositional, to one another. What makes me insist that the sentences are discrete? A simple test suffices. Were the following items given in some other order, viewed in that other sequence, they would make precisely as much, or as little, sense as they do in the order in which we see them. But in syllogistic logic, all the more so in teleological logic, (though not in *Listenwissenschaft*), the order of facts bears consequence. Indeed, reversing the order of sentences yields either a proposition exactly contrary to the one that is argued, or mere gibberish. In what follows, by contrast, the order of sentences has no bearing upon any proposition, and given the power of the correct ordering of facts/sentences in both syllogistic argument and teleological logic alike, the utter incapacity of order to impart meaning shows us that we have in hand a logic other than the philosophical-syllogistic or the teleological. Now to our passage:

Sifre to Deuteronomy XXV:I

1.A. "What kind of place are we going to? Our kinsmen have taken the heart out of us, saying, ['We saw there a people stronger and taller than we, large cities with walls sky-high, and even Anakites']" (Deut. 1:25–28):

B. They said to him, "Moses, our lord, had we heard these things from ordinary people, we should have never believed it.

C. "But we have heard it from people whose sons are ours and whose daughters are ours."

XXV:II

1.A. "We saw there a people . . . taller than we:"
B. This teaches that they were tall.
2.A. ". . . and greater . . .:"
B. This teaches that they were numerous.

XXV:III

1.A. ". . . large cities with walls sky-high, and even Anakites":
B. Rabban Simeon b. Gamaliel says, "In the present passage, Scriptures speak in exaggerated language: 'Hear, O Israel, you are going to pass over the Jordan this day to go in to dispossess nations greater and mightier than yourself, cities great and fortified up to heaven' (Deut. 9:1).
C. "But when God spoke to Abraham, Scripture did not use exaggerated language: 'And we will multiply your seed as the stars of the heaven' (Gen. 26:4), 'And we will make your seed as the dust of the earth' (Gen. 13:16)."

XXV:IV

1.A. ". . . and even Anakites did we see there":
B. This teaches that they saw giants on top of giants, in line with this verse: "Therefore pride is as a chain about their neck" (Ps. 73:6).

XXV:V

1.A. "And we said to you:"
B. He stressed to them, "It is not on our own authority that we speak to you, but it is on the authority of the Holy One that we speak to you."

XXV:VI

1.A. "Do not be frightened and do not be afraid of them:"
B. On what account?
C. "For the Lord your God is the one who goes before you."
D. He said to them, "The one who did miracles for you in Egypt and all these miracles is going to do miracles for you when you enter the land:
E. "'According to all that he did for you in Egypt before your eyes' (Deut. 1:30)."
F. "If you do not believe concerning what is coming, at least believe concerning what has already taken place."

That each unit of thought, signified by a Roman numeral, stands by itself hardly needs proof, since it is a self-evident fact. Were we to present the several items in a different order, that shift would have no affect whatsoever upon the meaning of the passage. That proves that the individual sentences bear no relationship to one another. Then it follows that there is no *equals*. All we have is a sequence of unrelated sentences, not a cogent paragraph; the sentences do not appeal to their neighbors, fore or aft, to prove a proposition beyond themselves; and each one, standing by itself, makes a point that bears no connection to any other in context—*except* for the verse of Deuteronomy, the base-verse, that all of them cite and claim to elucidate in one way or another. I cannot imagine how, apart from the mere statement of the facts, I can show more vividly that a sequence of utterly unrelated sentences has been laid forth before us. They occur in context of sequences of highly propositional units of thought.

The third logic therefore rests upon the premise that an established sequence of facts, e.g., holy days, holy persons, holy words, in a manner extrinsic to the sense of what is said joins whatever is attached to those words into a set of cogent statements, even though said sequence does not form of those statements propositions of any kind, implicit or explicit. The protocol of associated items, that is, the established sequence of words, may be made up of names always associated with one another. It may be made up of a received text, with deep meanings of its own, e.g., a verse or a clause of Scripture. It may be made up of the sequence of holy days or synagogue lections, which are assumed to be known by everyone and so to connect on their own.

The fixed association of these words, whether names, whether formulas such as verses of Scripture, whether lists of facts, serves to link otherwise unrelated statements to one another and to form of them all not a proposition but, nonetheless, an entirely intelligible sequence of connected or related sentences. Fixed association forms the antonym of free association. I know no case in Rabbinic literature in which the contents of one sentence stimulate a compositor to put down the next sentence only because one thing happens to remind the compositor of something else, that is, without any reference to a principle of association external to both sentences (our "fixed associa-

tion"), and also without any reference to a shared proposition that connects the two (our "propositional cogency").

To show the full power of the logic of fixed association, quite independent of the fixed associations defined by sequences of verses of Scripture and hence in no way serving as a commentary of any kind, I turn to a few lines of Mishnah-tractate Abot, The Fathers, Chapter One. That chapter is made up of three units, first, three names, then five paired names, finally, three more names. The first three names are Moses (and the following), then Simeon the Righteous, then Antigonos. The groups of pairs are the two Yoses, Joshua b. Perahiah and Nittai the Arbelite, Judah b. Tabbai and Simeon b. Shatah, Shemaiah and Abtalion, and, finally, Hillel and Shammai. Then at the end come Gamaliel, Simeon his son, and (repetitiously) Simeon b. Gamaliel. That the names are not random but meaningful, that the fixed association of name A with name B, name C with name D, name E with name F, and so on, is deemed cogent—these are the premises of all discourse in Chapter One of The Fathers. The premise rests on the simple fact that these names are announced as sequential, set by set—e.g., the first holds office M, the second, office N—and then in their unfolding, the first group is prior in time to the second, and on down. The order matters and conveys the information, therefore, that the compositor or author wishes to emphasize or rehearse. So when we claim that the logic of fixed association links sentences into meaningful compositions, even though it does not find cogency in the proposition at hand, we believe that claim rests upon the givens of reading the chapter at hand that universally prevail among all interpreters. I present in italics the apodosis—the propositions, the things that people say, which would correspond to the propositions of a syllogistic, philosophical discourse. In plain type is the attributive, or, in the less precise usage introduced earlier, the protasis.

1:1 Moses received the Torah at Sinai and handed it on to Joshua, Joshua to elders, and elders to prophets. And prophets handed it on to the men of the great assembly. They said three things: *Be prudent in judgment. Raise up many disciples. Make a fence for the Torah.*

1:2 Simeon the Righteous was one of the last survivors of the great assembly. He would say: *On three things does the world stand: On the Torah, and on the Temple service, and on deeds of loving-kindness.*

1:3 Antigonus of Sokho received [the Torah] from Simeon the Righteous. He would say: *Do not be like servants who serve the master on condition of receiving a reward, but [be] like servants who serve the master not on condition of receiving a reward. And let the fear of Heaven be upon you.*

That the names are intended signals is shown, of course, by the reference of No. 2 to No. 1 and No. 3 to No. 2. The rest of the chapter proceeds along these same lines. No unfolding proposition emerges from what is attributed to the named sages, and, indeed, most of the assigned statements stand autonomous of one another.

Now if we ask ourselves what the italicized words have in common, how they form a cogent discourse, the answer is clear. They have nothing in common, and they certainly do not so make connections as to draw a conclusion (though some may claim they are joined in overall theme), and, standing by themselves, do not establish a proposition in common. As propositions in sequence, they do not form an intelligible discourse. But—and this must stand as a premise of all argument—in the mind of the authorship of The Fathers, which has set matters forth as we see them, those same words serve intelligible discourse. But the principle of cogency, upon which intelligibility rests, does not derive from what is said. A shared topic by itself does not in our view constitute an adequate logic of connection between two otherwise discrete sentences, though, admittedly, a shared topic is better than none at all.

To recapitulate: the principle is that things are deemed to form a fixed sequence, specifically, the list of named authorities. The premise that because Rabbi X is linked on a common list—a text, a canon of names—with Rabbi Y, and linked in that order, first X, then Y, accounts (for the authorship at hand) for the intelligibility of the writing before us: this is connected to that. That is to say, the logic joining one sentence to another in The Fathers derives

from the premise of fixed associations, or, stated in more general terms, an established or classic text. This formulation of fixed associations, this received text—in this case, a list of names—joins together otherwise unrelated statements. What makes two or more sequential sentences into an intelligible statement overall (or in its principal parts) is not *what* is said but (in this context) *who* does the saying. The list of those canonical names, in proper order, imparts cogency to an otherwise unintelligible sequence of statements (any one of which, to be sure, is as intelligible as the statement, "all Greeks are philosophers").

The upshot is a statement that relies for intelligibility upon the premise of fixed associations, e.g., an established text. The text does not have to be a holy book and it need not even be in writing. It may consist in a list of names, a passage of Scripture, the known sequence of events, as in the Pesher-writings, or even the well-known sequence of events in the life of a holy man. But the *and* of this connection—hence also mode of drawing conclusions if any—differs in its fundamental logic of cogency from one that relies for intelligibility upon either narrative, on the one side, or philosophical and syllogistic thought, on the other. What holds the whole together is knowledge shared among those to whom this writing is addressed, hence the "fixed" part of "fixed association," as distinct from (mere) free association.

Metapropositional Discourse

Despite its formidable name, this kind of logic is not difficult to grasp; essentially it amounts to making a point of an abstract character by exemplifying the same concrete fact over and over again. Then the reader can identify out of the cases the proposition that is intended. Metapropositional discourse forms a subspecies of propositional; the former is not articulated, the latter is. That is to say, propositional discourse involves setting forth facts to prove a point, such as the authorship of the Mishnah accomplished, or laying out facts to point to a conclusion, as in the case of narrative.

This sort of discourse characterizes philosophy, including of course natural philosophy. Metapropositional discourse proves the unity of diverse cases by imposing a single program of analytical questions—hence "methodical-analytical"—upon a virtually unlimited range of problems. This demonstration of the proposition, within the deep structure of argument, that all things fit into a single pattern, is accomplished through sorting out many and diverse cases and the discourse repeatedly invokes a fixed set of questions. And that kind of inquiry marks science, natural and social, as we know it today. It is the supreme effort to put two and two together and therefore to explain four.

I call this classification of logic in discourse metapropositional because the effect is to present two propositions, one immediate and at the surface, the other within the subterranean layers of thought, with the latter the more encompassing of the two, of course. The former—propositions concerning the case at hand,—may derive from familiar modes of argument, making connections between two facts and drawing a conclusion from them. Or the superficial discourse may present what appears to be merely a simple assertion of fact, with no further conclusion to be drawn or even intended. But the latter—the metapropositional level—always sets forth a fundamental proposition and proves it.

For this higher level of discourse manages time and again to make a single point even while examining many points, and it is that capacity to conduct discourse at two levels, the one near at hand, the other at the level of recurrent polemic, that I find remarkable. Metapropositional discourse does not repeat itself; there is no recourse to only one proposition in every instance. But the propositions indeed prove few, and a survey of the canonical writings underlines the limited program of thought encompassed by this mode of discourse: the propositions are few, but they recur everywhere. That is why the upshot is to prove the unities of diverse things, and to do so in such a way which, time and again, one is able to articulate the proposition that is demonstrated through recurrent proofs of little things.

Metapropositional discourse of course forms a subdivision of propositional discourse. What distinguishes this species from its genus is not only that in these cases, the compositors make two points, one on the surface, another underneath. This mode of thought, seeking unity in diversity in a highly particular way, affects a broad range of documents; it is an instance of that process that, in the aggregate, defines traits indicative not of particular documents but of large sectors of the canon as a whole. Indeed, the intellectually highly-structured character of the Mishnah, with its systematic and orderly exposition of the extension or restriction of rules, its rigorous exercise in comparison and contrast, sets the style and defines the task for later authorships, to the end of the formation of the canon in late antiquity. Not only so, but the mind trained in seeking unity in diversity, and unity susceptible of statement in proposition, works systematically through an amazingly broad program of topical inquiry and repeatedly produces that single, besought result. Out of this kind of mind, capable of making connections among wildly diverse data, science can have arisen, so far as science seeks connections and draws conclusions to explain connections. But in so stating, I have once more moved too far ahead of my argument. What of the propositional character of metapropositional discourse?

The propositions that are proven in each instance are in one case minor and in the other, encompassing. The minor proposition is on the surface, the rule prevailing in a detail of law. The encompassing generalization bears global consequence, that is, for example, reason alone bears reliable results, and the like. Commonly, the surface-generalization forms little more than a clause or a verse followed by a phrase in amplification thereof. Yet the unit of thought may be enormous, relative to the size—number of words—of the completed units of thought in our document. Reading the cases of Scripture and transforming them into general rules suitable for restatement in, and as, the Mishnah, the authorship of Sifre to Deuteronomy, for example, accomplished an amazing feat of sheer brilliance: holding many things together within a single theoretical framework. What is critical in holding together discourse in these items therefore is the imposition of a fixed analytical method, rather than the search for a generalization and its demonstration or proof. These items are topically discrete but time and again present the application of a fixed analytical system or structure or produce, in an episodic instance, a recurrent proposition of an analytical character (e.g., extension or restriction of a rule, demonstration that solely through Scripture are firm conclusions to be established).

One recurring exercise, which fills up much of the discussion of the legal passages of Deuteronomy in Sifre to Deuteronomy, for example, systematically proposes to generalize the case-discourse of the book of Deuteronomy and to reframe the case into the example of a general law. The "if a person does such and so," or the details of a case as spelled out in Scripture will be subjected to a sustained exercise of generalization. In this exercise one does two things. Either—in the process of generalization—he will restrict the rule, or he will extend it. If Scripture contains a detail, such as the statement of a case always demands, one should ask whether that detail restricts the rule to a kind of case defined by the detail, or whether that detail represents a more general category of cases and is to be subjected, therefore, to generalization. (In the unfortunate word-choice of contemporary philosophy, the fixed analytical method at hand investigates issues of *generalizability*.) Here is an example of many instances in which the authorship of a sustained discourse proposes to turn a case into a law.

> Sifre to Deuteronomy CLXVI:I
>
> 1.A. "[You shall also give him] the first fruits of your new grain and wine and oil, [and the first shearing of your sheep. For the Lord your God has chosen him and his descendants, out of all your tribes, to be in attendance for service in the name of the Lord for all time]" (Deut. 18:1–6):
>
> B. This teaches that offerings are taken up for the priestly rations only from produce of the finest quality.

The point applies to more than the case at hand. At issue is whether we extend or

restrict the applicability of the rule. Here we restrict it.

2.A. Just as we find that as to two varieties of produce of fruit-bearing trees, priestly rations are not taken from the one to provide the requisite gift for the other as well,
B. so in the case of two varieties of produce of grain and vegetables, priestly rations are not taken from the one to provide the requisite gift for the other as well.

No. 2 is parachuted down and has no bearing upon anything in the cited verse. But the importance is to derive a general rule, as stated at B, which applies to a broad variety of categories of priestly gifts, just as at No. 1.

CLXVI:II
1.A. ". . . the first shearing of your sheep:"
B. not the fleece that falls off when the sheep is dipped.
2.A. ". . . the first shearing of your sheep:"
B. excluding a sheep that suffers from a potentially fatal ailment.
3.A. ". . . the first shearing of your sheep:"
B. whether in the land or abroad.

No. 1 is particular to our verse, Nos. 2, 3 are general rules invoked case by case. These items are not coherent, one by one, and the three sentences in no way state a single proposition, explicit or otherwise. And yet the exercise of analysis is uniform—I could give many dozens of cases in which precisely the same distinctions are made—and the purpose is clear. It is to impose upon the case a set of generalizing issues, which yield either restrictive or expansive definitions. This is a fine instance of what I mean by attaining cogent discourse—linking one sentence to another—through an established methodical analysis of one sort of another.

CLXVI:IV
1.A. "You shall also give him:"
B. This indicates that there should be sufficient fleece to constitute a gift.
C. On this basis sages have ruled:
D. How much does one give to the priest?
E. Five selas' weight in Judah, equivalent to ten in Galilee, bleached but not spun,
F. sufficient to make a small garment from it,
G. as it is said, "You shall also give him:"
H. This indicates that there should be sufficient fleece to constitute a gift.

The same pattern recurs as before, and the interest is in an autonomous program. This represents a different kind of methodical analysis. The framer wishes to relate a verse of Scripture to a rule in the Mishnah and so asks how C-F are founded on Scripture. G-H go over the ground of A-B. The work of restriction or expansion of the rule is now implicit, of course. Metapropositional discourse takes a central place in some documents, e.g., Sifra and the two Talmuds, none at all in many others.

To conclude: metapropositional discourse brings to expression a range of logic that shows unity in diversity, demonstrates that many things follow a single rule, and demonstrates how a few simple propositions underlie many complex statements of fact. That mode of thought seeks connections at the deepest structure of thought and proposes to explain by reference to a single rule a various and vast universe of fact. Metapropositional logic makes a single fabric out of the threads of propositional logic that fill up the loom comprised by one document after another. Sifra and the two Sifres stood for that large sector of the canonical writings that, all together, serve to make a few fundamental points, applicable to many cases indeed. The two Talmuds present us with the same phenomenon: systemic and generalizing thinking about the discrete propositional statements presented by the Mishnah. And yet, while the two Sifres and Sifra (among other writings) prove essentially metapropositional in their overall structure, attaining cogency by doing one thing many times and showing the inner simplicity of the outwardly complex propositions at hand, the Yerushalmi—and by extension, the Bavli—does not follow suit. Quite to the contrary, if we had to characterize the paramount logic of cogent discourse of the Yerushalmi, we should have to identify the prevailing principle of joining one statement to another, that is, of making connection, not with propositional, let alone metapropositional, discourse, but with the connection imposed by fixed association, that alone. For while the several units of completed thought in the two Talmuds systematically

connect fact to fact, sentence to sentence, through the shared proposition generated by what is reasoned and syllogistic argument, those units of thought themselves find connection only in their common reference-point, the Mishnah. The two Talmuds, as we shall see, succeed in making enormous statements because they join syllogistic logic, which stands behind the bulk of their compositions, to fixed associative logic, which holds the compositions together in huge composites.

The prevailing logics in some documents work in both the parts and the whole, in one and the same way, connecting sentence to sentence, and also paragraph to paragraph. In the Mishnah, Genesis Rabbah, and Leviticus Rabbah, the same logic of propositional discourse that links sentence to sentence also links paragraph to paragraph. That is to say, propositions join one fact or sentence to another and make of the whole a single cogent statement. Still broader propositions join one large-scale cogent statement ("paragraph" in the language of the opening sentence) to another cogent statement. The logic of the whole also defines the logic of the parts. And the same is so of the metapropositional discourse that makes the accomplishment of the authorship of Sifra so remarkable and imparts noteworthy force and sustained argument to the discrete statements of the two Sifres as well.

In all three documents, the metapropositional program of the parts imparts its character to large stretches of the whole as well. We may therefore conclude that some documents hold together, whole and also in part in one and the same way. They will find connections between their sentences and among the compositions of sentences either by systematically setting forth propositions, argued along the lines of syllogism, worked out through the analysis accomplished by classification, comparison and contrast, of genus and species, for instance, and this they will do throughout. Or authorships will impose a single subterranean program upon data of unlimited diversity and show, point by point and overall as well, the unities within diverse facts—documents that persistently make metapropositional points and all together find cogency through those recurrent exercises of deep and methodical analysis.

But the Yerushalmi and the Bavli differ in their basic logical structure from all the other documents. For the authorships of these writings compose their completed units of thought principally as propositional, or metapropositional statements. The logic, then, connects one fact to another, one sentence to another, in such a way as to form a proposition. But the joining of one completed unit of thought ("paragraph," "propositional statement") to another finds connection not in a still larger exercise of propositional discourse but rather by appeal to the connection imposed through the fixed association accomplished by the framers of the Mishnah or by the author of Scripture. That mixing of two logics, the propositional for medium-range discourse, the fixed associative for large-scale composition, differentiates the two Talmuds from all other canonical writings.

Tradition, Commentary, and Logic

The logic of fixed association clearly serves the purpose of composing in some sort of cogent way the discrete observations about this and that of which a commentary to a fixed text is made up. But, as our survey of the documents of Rabbinic literature will show us, the prevailing logic is not exegetical for the sentences or fixed associative for the logic of coherent discourse, but highly propositional. Most large-scale and sustained units of cogent discourse except for the Bavli, appeal for cogency to propositions, not to fixed associations, such as characterize commentaries of a certain sort and other compilations of exegeses of verses of Scripture.

Strictly speaking, commentary has no need for propositions in order to establish coherence among discrete sentences, though through commentary an authorship may propose to prove propositions (as is the case with methodical-analytical demonstrations via metapropositional logic). A document formed in order to convey exegesis attains cogency and imparts connections to two or more sentences by appeal to fixed associations. It makes no call upon narrative, does

not demand recurrent methodical analyses. The text that is subjected to commentary accomplishes the joining of sentence to sentence, and to that cogency, everything else proves secondary. For, by definition, a commentary appeals for cogency to the text that the commentators propose to illuminate.

True, they may frame their commentary in diverse, appropriate ways. For example, they may comment by translating. They may comment by tacking paragraphs—stories, expositions of ideas, and the like—onto constituent structures of the base-verse. But, overall, the genre, commentary, dictates its own rhetoric, such as we have noticed, and its own logic. The logic of commentary, narrowly viewed, is that of fixed-associative compositions.

But, as a matter of fact, most of the Rabbinic commentaries to Scripture proved highly propositional, not only in general, but also in detail, not only in proposition, but also in process and in rhetorical pattern. What holds things together in large-scale, sustained discourse does not rely upon the verse at hand to impose order and cogency upon discourse. Writers, as in the middle and late Midrash-compilations, ordinarily appeal to propositions to hold two or more sentences together. If, by definition, a commentary appeals for cogency to the text that the commentators propose to illuminate, then far more common is a document that is in no essential way a commentary. The logic is not that of a commentary, and the formal repertoires show strong preference for other than commentary-form. So far as commentary dictates both its own rhetoric and its own logic, the documents have to be described in the aggregate as highly argumentative, profoundly well-crafted and cogent sets of propositions. Authors found a need for propositions to attain cogency or impart connections to two or more sentences, called upon narrative, demanded recurrent analyses of a single sort.

JACOB NEUSNER

Rabbinic Literature in Medieval and Modern Times

THE writing of commentary upon the literature of the oral Torah begins within the earliest layers of that literature itself. The Talmud itself preserves statements in which such second century Tannaim as Meir and Judah comment on the earlier first century teachings of the Houses of Hillel and Shammai, teachings that appear in the Mishnah without commentary. The result of this continuing process of exegesis is that in later Rabbinic writings we often find several tiers of interpretation on earlier material. The Talmuds of Babylonia (the "Babli") and of the Land of Israel ("the Palestinian Talmud" or the "Yerushalmi"), that is, contain elucidations of earlier legal and nonlegal matters found in the Mishnah, the Tosefta, in other Tannaitic traditions, and of passages of both legal and homiletical midrash. Through these interpretations, the Talmudic authorities ("Amoraim") explained in detail the teachings of their own masters as well as the teachings of the earlier rabbis ("Tannaim"), sometimes clarifying the apparent original intent of the materials they explained but also, at times, reinterpreting those traditions to fashion the diversity of disparate materials into a unified whole. Thus Rabbinic masters emended traditions, forced readings, reversed names of tradents, and utilized other methods to resolve contradictions and so systematize the materials they inherited. The result is a complicated maze of winds and turns that is often unintelligible to all but the dedicated specialist, and even to such an expert, large portions remain difficult.

To help resolve these difficulties, the geonim and later commentators to the Talmud developed formulations by which they could interpret complex passages and distill a legal system from the maze of debated Talmudic statements. Often these commentators and decisors did not agree with each other, so that, in questions of interpretation, students are left to consult the works that best satisfy their own approaches and, often, to develop their own

solutions. In questions of practical law, of course, there is no such latitude, as the *halakhah* resides in the hands of current authorities.

The following lists in chronological order the most outstanding Talmudic commentators. Due to space constraints, commentators on the midrashic literature are not included. Considered of secondary importance in Rabbinic scholarship, Midrash was known for the most part through the works of the great biblical commentators.[1] Nevertheless, many popular commentaries were written on the midrashim, though these have not been covered here.

Geonim

With the Islamic conquests, the old academies of Sura and Pumbedita became rejuvenated with a spirit of centralized authority. The heads of the academies, now called geonim ("Excellent authorities"), disseminated teachings far and wide concerning normative *halakhic* practice. Where the Talmud lacked clarity or did not offer a specific guideline on a topic, people addressed questions to the geonim, and they, in turn, wrote detailed answers. The institution of responsa literature that resulted has its roots in the Talmud, where we hear that, to clarify proper practices, certain rabbis asked questions of other authorities. These responsa form the first commentaries to the Talmud, and it appears that at times scribes allowed geonic comments to creep into the Talmudic texts themselves. At the same time, geonim helped fix the Talmudic text, determine meaning, and organize communal custom by fixing the order of the liturgy. *Seder Tikkun Shetarot, Halakhot Pesukot*, and *Halakhot Gedolot* are all geonic legal works that shaped the direction of legal practice in the post-Talmudic era.

Saadiah Ben Joseph Gaon (882–942)

The head of the Sura academy, a scholar of Torah and secular sciences, Saadiah was considered the greatest author of the geonic period. His major philosophic work, *The Book of Beliefs and Opinions*, was among the first philosophic classics of Judaism and the earliest to survive intact. His translation of the Bible into Arabic, which incorporates his commentary into a paraphrase of the literal text, is still used today by many Arabic-speaking Jews. He wrote commentaries to other biblical works as well and compiled the liturgy for the year into a comprehensive volume, still consulted today for its variant readings. His *Sefer Ha-Zikaron* and *Sefer Ha-Moadim* depict the dispute between the Babylonian and Jerusalem academies over the fixing of the Jewish calendar, which was ultimately resolved in accordance with the traditions of Babylonian Jewry. Saadiah's halakhic decisions took the form of monographs, and he established a standard format for his books of halakhic decisions. As a result of his belligerent character, he had many political enemies who succeeded in upsetting his career. His greatest victories were in discrediting the Karaite stances of biblical interpretation and anti-Rabbinic polemic.

Sherira Ben Hanina Gaon (Tenth Century)

The prolific head of the Pumbedita academy in 968–1006, he wrote many responsa. He and his son, Hai ben Sherira, are believed to be the authors of one third to one half of the geonic responsa literature. Sherira is known to have composed a commentary on the Bible and on several tractates of the Talmud. He also assembled a glossary on the first and last orders of the Mishnah. His *Iggeret Rav Sherira Gaon* attempts to reconstruct the processes of redaction of the Mishnah and Talmud, as well as of the Tosefta and *beraitot*. The work is extant in French and Spanish recensions, which differ on key issues. Sherira established the pre-eminence of the Babylonian Talmud as the universal source of authority in Jewish legal tradition.

Hai Ben Sherira Gaon (939–1038)

The head of the academy 998–1038, he composed commentaries on several tractates

of the Babylonia Talmud and authored numerous responsa. Ranking as the most influential of the geonim, among his major works are treatises on commercial transactions, marriage, divorce, and other contracts and documents in prescribed format. He also composed approximately two dozen poems, including five *selihot* for the Ninth of Av, and several liturgical poems. He argued for the metaphorical interpretation of anthropomorphic passages in the Talmud and Midrash, on the one hand, and against the search for reasons for the commandments, on the other. His responsa disavowing the literal truth of miraculous tales in the Talmud and describing the practices of Merkava mystics are vital in the study of the history of philosophy and mysticism.

Rishonim

The period of the Rishonim—earliest Talmudic commentators—began in the tenth century in Spain and Germany, when some centers of Jewish habitation moved far from the orbit of Palestine and the Fertile Crescent and developed their own academies, independent of the existing central authorities. Marked at first by relative tranquillity but then marred by Muslim and Christian persecutions, this period was one of social and political unhappiness, on the one hand, but of scholarly stability, on the other. The one avenue Jews had to express themselves as Jews was in the autonomy of their religious and civil administrations. The task of the Rishonim was to render the traditional intelligible to the novice, who could gain enlightenment through the written works of Responsa and commentary. The Rishonim edited texts, commented on them, decided law according to their own methods of analysis, and provided leadership for the masses while maintaining their own specialized institutions of learning. The responsa, codes, and commentaries of this period stabilized Jewish teaching, doctrine, and practice.

Gershom Ben Judah (c. 965–1028)

He became renowned as the foremost Jewish scholar in the West and is referred to as Meor Ha-Golah ("Light of the Diaspora"). His decrees, cited to this day, include one mentioned by Rashi that forbids people from reminding returned apostates of their past. While Gershom's liturgical hymns survive, commentaries attributed to him apparently were written by his students. One of them, Jacob bar Yakar, was the primary teacher of Rashi, who reports what was written in the Talmud of Rabbenu Gershom, which he had seen. Gershom is widely cited by early scholars, but none of his legal writings have reached us directly. His responsa were collected from citations in other works and published in 1955 by S. Eidelberg. There is some literary evidence that his son and wife converted to Christianity, and he endured many tragedies.

Hananel Ben Hushi'el of Kairouan (died c. 1055)

This prolific master wrote a commentary on the Babylonian Talmud that paraphrased, summarized, and analyzed the discussions and noted the current legal practices. He was the first commentator regularly to include the discussions found in the Palestinian Talmud. The extant portions of his commentaries, on Berakhot and Seders Nashim, Moed, and Nezikin, focus on issues with practical applications. They includes material from the Tosefta as well as legal midrash. Hananel's Talmud commentary was highly regarded by the scholars of North Africa, particularly Isaac Alfasi in Spain. His commentary to the Pentateuch was also quoted extensively, although only fragments are extant, and some have been published. He also is known to have composed *Sefer Dinim*, which is no longer extant.

Isaac Ben Jacob Alfasi (1013–1103)

Known as Rif, he compiled a guide to all of the laws of the Talmud in practice in

his time. His *Sefer Ha-Halakhot* codified the applicable legal material, quoting and commenting on the discussion in the Talmud as well as the interpretations of the geonim and his own opinions. Alfasi was also the author of numerous responsa, several hundred of which have survived. He is the major source for subsequent codes, and his decisions more than those of any other single individual shaped the future of Jewish legal practice.

Joseph Tov Elem Bonfils (Eleventh c.)

One of the great liturgical poets and scholars of France in the period of Rashi's youth, he appears to have been the copyist of geonic works such as *Halakhot Pesukot, Halakhot Gedolot, Teshuvot Ha-Geonim*, and *Seder Tannaim ve-Amoraim*. Only a few sections from his works have survived. He was a master talmudist who composed a commentary to the Talmud that occasionally is cited by Rashi and the Baalei Ha-Tosafot. His responsa sometimes are cited by Maharam Rothenberg. He is sometimes confused in the legal literature with another scholar of the same name who lived in the twelfth century.

Isaac Ibn Geat (Died c. 1089)

A Spanish poet and halakhist, his major works have not survived, although we do have a collection of his legal expositions, known as *Meah Shearim* or *Shearei Simha*, which covers the topics of Jewish law in the order their tractates appear in the Talmud. His exposition is chronological, beginning with the Talmudic discussions, then citing the geonic understandings of the Talmud, and then those of the subsequent commentators. Modern scholars have found much useful information in his variants to the Talmud and geonic literature. Many of the most important decisors cite his works: Rabad, Ramban, Rashba, Rosh, and others. We know he composed commentaries to biblical books and literally hundreds of liturgical poems incorporating mystical themes, of which most have been lost.

Solomon Ben Isaac (c. 1040–1105)

Rashi, as he is called, was a native of Troyes in France in the area of Champagne. He often praises his teachers, such as Isaac ben Eleazar, but has no reservation about differing from their interpretations. Rashi's grandsons (he had no sons of his own) were great scholars who founded the methods and schools of the Baalei Ha-Tosafot. Besides his biblical commentaries, Rashi composed a masterful commentary to the Talmud. This has supplanted all others and remains to this day the definitive work on the Talmud, alongside which it is printed. The commentaries bearing his name to some tractates, however, are not his, his own work having been lost or perhaps, in some cases, never composed. Rashi's command of the Talmud and ability to explain Talmudic discussions succinctly allows us to see the weakness of the commentaries, erroneously ascribed to him, to Horayot, Nazir, Taanit, Nedarim, and Moed Qatan (his actual commentary to which has now been located and printed).

Rashi's renditions of difficult pericopae, which he deciphers by reference to other Talmudic passages, show his genius and perceptive mind. He explains difficult words and usages and argues against weak explanations. In the course of his exegetical work, he suggested emendations to the Talmudic texts used in France and Germany and soon afterwards. To the horror of his grandsons, his admirers copied these emendations, offered as mere comments and not corrections, into the actual text of the Talmud. His legal rulings are preserved in collected responsa, such as that of Elfein (who also edited other rulings in *Sefer Ha-Sedarim* [Horeb, 1951]). Most often cited in connection with Rashi's legal decisions are *Sefer Ha-Pardes, Machzor Vitry, Sefer Issur ve-Heter*, and *Siddur Rashi*. It became the practice of legal commentators to cite Rashi's understandings of details of laws in Caro's authoritative *Shulhan Arukh*, although Caro often

adopted *verbatim* the rulings of Maimonides. The commentary of Obadiah Bertinora to the Mishnah is largely borrowed from Rashi's commentary to the Talmud. As a result, Rashi's influence on modern halakhah is enormous.

Samuel Ben Meir (c. 1080–1165)

Rashbam was born in Northern France (Ramerupt), the grandson and student of Rashi and the brother of the illustrious Jacob, commonly referred to as Rabbenu Tam. Yet he, in his own right, was both a Talmudic commentator, not in the manner of Rashi's crisp glosses, but as a propounder of new ideas used to reconcile Talmudic passages that seemed in conflict. His interpretations were used to supplement Rashi's sparse commentary to tractate Baba Batra and the tenth chapter of Pesahim. Rashbam's Talmudic commentaries were much different in method from his biblical ones. The latter focused on the most apparent meanings of texts and eschewed such forced comments as ran through Rabbinic tradition to reconcile biblical and Rabbinic teachings. In his explanations of the Talmud, by contrast, he does not spare his imaginative impulses, reconciling disparate sources and producing an interpretation that justified both Rabbinic tradition and contemporary practice. A proficient halakhist, he ranks as a leader, perhaps the founder, of the school of the Baalei Ha-Tosafot.

Jacob Ben Meir (1100–1171)

Rabbenu Tam was the younger brother of Rashbam and the grandchild of Rashi. His work on the Babylonian Talmud laid the foundations for the work of the Baalei Ha-Tosafot. Suffering much during the crusades, he wrote liturgical hymns as well as some Bible commentaries. His Talmudic pronouncements became the basis for Jewish law in Ashkenazic lands, and his extra-Talmudic decrees were accepted widely. His major work, *Sefer Ha-Yashar*, reconciled apparent discrepancies among various Talmudic pericopae by identifying a single principle that would account for all the passages. Much of his effort was aimed at emending corrupted passages in the Talmudic text and, in this way, making the Talmud more lucid. He was careful to insist that his emendations be kept in commentaries and not introduced into the main body of texts passed down from generation to generation, since no one had the right to interfere in the natural transmission of texts.

His comments took into account contemporary social relevance and communal needs, and he did not value the interpretations of past or present masters on the simple basis of their perceived authority or reputation. Rather, he viewed the cogency and usefulness of the argument alone as paramount. His arguments with his grandfather Rashi are well known, and his ideas about the proper order of the texts contained in the phylacteries are still followed today, alongside the view of Rashi (so that some Jews don two sets of phylacteries daily).

Jacob ben Meir produced works beyond his Talmudic comments, including a liturgical manual containing all the laws of prayer and their texts. He also wrote comments to Alfasi's work. The *Machzor Vitry* contains his *Hilkhot Sefer Torah*. References are found in the writings of other scholars to his *Sefer Ha-Pesakim*, but no copies of the work exist. A scholar of Hebrew grammar, his *Sefer Ha-Hakhraot* defended Menahem ibn Saruk in his grammatical dispute with Dunash ibn Labrat.

Isaac Ben Samuel of Dampierre (Died c. 1185)

He was the major figure in promoting the study methods of the Tosafists. His students produced the major volumes of the writings of the Baalei Ha-tosafot. He is called Ri Ha-Zaken (that is, Rabbi Isaac the elder) and was the nephew of Rashbam and Rabbenu Tam. His work remains the basis of the Tosafists' commentaries to the Talmud, edited by his student, Samson of Sens, the famed author of a commentary to the Mishnaic Division of Zeraim. He was also the teacher of Barukh, the author of *Sefer*

Ha-Truma. His responsa often are cited by halakhic authorities of the period and repeatedly in the ha-lakhic compendium *Or Zarua* by Isaac of Vienna. His bible commentaries and commentary to Alfasi's compendium have not survived.

Jacob Ben Samson (Died c. 1130)

A student of Rashi and teacher of Rabbenu Tam, he wrote many commentaries, and citations of his work on Abot are interpolated into a commentary on Abot in *Machzor Vitry*. He composed a commentary to *Sefer Yetzira* and a work, *Seder Olam*, listing the chronologies of the Talmudic rabbis. He was a noted collector of ancient liturgical poetry and composed liturgical hymns himself. Most of his work has not as yet been published.

Isaac Ben Asher Ha-Levi (Eleventh-Twelfth Centuries)

Known as the Riva, this master Tosafist and student of Rashi composed novellae to most of the Talmud. Although no longer extant, his commentary to the Pentateuch and his responsa are cited by early authorities. He was the teacher Eliezer ben Joel Ha-Levi, the author of the *Ravya*, a notable halakhic work still cited by modern decisors.

Abraham Ben David of Posquieres (1125–1198)

The Rabad was the leader of his generation in France, Germany, and Spain and forged new methods and understandings in the method of Talmudic analysis and law. His colleagues were very prominent scholars, such as Abraham ben Isaac the author of the *Sefer Ha-Eshkol*, but he nevertheless operated under his own inspiration, without consulting others. He even wrote a book, *Issur Mashehu*, to show the mistakes of his teacher.

He wrote legal expositions such as *Baalei Nefesh* on the laws of menstruation and ritual immersion. He composed lengthy criticisms on Zerahiah Ha-Levi's *Sefer Ha-Meor*, in which Rabad defends Alfasi against well-taken and perceptive attacks. Nevertheless Rabad finds fault with Alfasi too at times. Ramban defended Alfasi against the comments of Rabad in his *Sefer Zekhut*. Some responsa of Rabad are found in *Sefer Ha-Tashbatz*. He is best known for his critiques of Maimonides' *Mishneh Torah*, which are printed in standard editions of Maimonides' work. His commentaries to Mishnah tractates Eduyyot and Kinim, to Sifra, and to the Talmud (of which we have only a few works extant) are of the highest order.

Zerahiah Ben Isaac Ha-Levi (Died 1186)

He wrote the *Sefer Ha-Meor* at a young age and thereby established himself as a genius of the first rank. His colleague Rabad saw his arguments against the great work of Alfasi as impudence. Rabbi Zerahiah, or Raza as he is called, wrote the *Sefer Ha-Meor Ha-Gadol* on the orders of Nashim and Nezikin and the *Sefer Ha-Meor Ha-Qatan* on the order of Moed. His comments are published in standard editions of the Talmud beneath the work of Alfasi, and alongside it is published Ramban's defense, called *Milhamot Ha-Shem*. Although Raza's *Hilkhot Shehita*, *Hilkhot Bedika*, and some other works are no longer extant, we have his notes to Mishnah tractate Kinim, printed alongside Rabad's commentary in standard editions of the Talmud. Raza was an accomplished poet, both liturgical and secular. His *Sefer Ha-Tsava* criticizes Alfasi and Rabad for at times ignoring thirteen basic rules of Talmudic study.

Isaac Ben Abba Mari of Marseilles (c. 1122–1193)

He is the author of the *Ittur*, or *Ittur Sofrim*, a magnificent work of which our printed texts are poorly edited and presented. A new edition from good manuscripts is necessary. He was the first French or Provencal scholar to use the Palestinian Talmud extensively, and his work contains a wealth of

information taken from the responsa of geonim. It is a legal compendium covering almost all the topics of daily living: civil law, religious law including the festivals, circumcision, phylacteries, and ritual fringes. His glosses to Alfasi's massive compendium is called *Meah Shearim* and can be found is standard editions of the Babylonian Talmud.

Eliezer Ben Nathan of Mainz (1090–1170)

Ravan was one of the most outstanding of the Baalei Ha-Tosafot and has left us a number of important works. *Sefer Ha-Ravan* (or *Even Ha-Ezer*) is a compendium of laws in the form of a code in which he cites texts and readings from the Talmud and midrash that are of immense importance for understanding the period of the Baalei Ha-Tosafot. He wrote an important commentary to the entire liturgy, which has been partially published.

Eliezer Ben Samuel of Metz (1115–1198)

A student of Rabbenu Tam, he analyzed the 613 commandments. His *Sefer Yeraim* preserves early variant readings of the classics of Rabbinic Judaism. He has left other works as well, which contain historical information of his period. His interpretations are cited in the *magnum opus* of Mordecai ben Hillel.

Moses Ben Maimon (1135–1204)

In his early years, Rambam, or Maimonides, wrote his commentary to the Mishnah in Arabic to explain the principles of legal decision making. His introduction to the Division of Agriculture, for example, summarizes the entire history of the oral law from the time of Moses to his own, while his introduction to Abot, called *Shemoneh Perakim*, reconciles Aristotelian ethics and Jewish law. Maimonides' "Thirteen Articles of Faith" are presented in his introduction to Sanhedrin Chapter 10 and became the model for subsequent formulations of Jewish belief. In his *Sefer Ha-Mitzvot*, also written in Arabic, Maimonides identifies and classifies the 613 commandments according to his own system. His *Mishneh Torah*, or *Yad Ha-Hazakah*, was his definitive halakhic compendium, written in clear and precise Hebrew but lacking any designation of sources. For this he was criticized by his scholarly contemporaries, who were concerned that students would depend upon Maimonides and abandon the study of the Talmud and its commentaries. Maimonides also wrote responsa, many of which have been published, a commentary to the Babylonian Talmud, which is no longer extant, a halakhic analysis of the Palestinian Talmud, which has not survived, treatises on logic and medicine, and important letters to communities. His *Guide for the Perplexed* in Arabic seeks to reconcile the principles of Jewish faith with those of philosophy.

Judah Ben Samuel he-Hasid (1150–1217)

He was the teacher of Eleazar ben Judah of Worms and the principal author of the *Sefer Hassidim*, which has set many practices for the naming of children and mourning rituals. He was a mystic, pietist, legal decisor, liturgist, and ascetic. Many mystical works of his remain in manuscript as well as works of piety and moral instruction. His will has been published many times but, at the hands of many editors, has suffered additions and omissions.

Isaac Ben Moses of Vienna (1180–1250)

This great scholar studied in the finest academies of Germany and France, but his foremost teacher was Isaac Sir-Lyons of Paris. He studied mysticism under Judah he-Hassid and is the author of *Or Zarua*, a massive halakhic work that suffered badly at the hands of copyists. He was able to consult the *Ravya* of Eliezer ben Joel Ha-Levi, under whom he had studied.

Samson Ben Abraham of Sens (Died c. 1220)

His great contribution was the compiling of the works of the Tosafists of France and Germany, which are now printed on the pages of standard editions of the Babylonian Talmud. His teachers were Rabbenu Tam and Isaac ben Samuel Ha-Zaken. His commentary to the Mishnah is simply called Commentary of Rash Mi-Shantz and covers every book of the Mishnah to which there is no Babylonian Talmud. It is a thorough and massive work that utilizes both the Palestinian Talmud and the Tosefta to elucidate the Mishnah, as well as citing places in the Babylonian Talmud where these passages of the Mishnah are tangentially mentioned.

Isaiah Ben Mali of Trani (Died c. 1260)

Known as the Rid, this Italian scholar exchanged many letters with Isaac ben Moses. His explanations of Talmudic passages, called *Tosafot Ha-Rid*, have been printed covering the majority of tractates in the Babylonian Talmud, though some are not yet in print. He authored several halakhic works, such as *Sefer Ha-Machria*, but many of his works, such as his commentary to Sifra, have not yet been printed. His grandson was called Elijah (Riaz) and wrote a copious halakhic work, *Piskei Halakhot*, encompassing all the practical laws.

Menahem Ben Solomon Ha-Meiri (1249–1316)

This Provencal scholar was one of the most prolific writers of all times. His *Beit Ha-Behira* commentary to the Talmud encompasses 37 tractates. After elucidating a particular passage of the Mishnah, he collects all the materials pertinent to any Talmudic discussions concerning that passage and lays them out before reporting what every major commentator has had to say about them. His work is replete with citations from the geonim and the Yerushalmi. Instead of calling commentators by their names he describes them with adjectives that capture the essence of their endeavors. He indicates preferred legal practice and reinterprets some fantastic Talmudic tales as metaphors for rational experiences.

He incorporated chronologies of the great rabbis into a section of his work in one place and in another collects the laws of washing hands. He wrote other commentaries to the Talmud as well and to some books of Scripture, such as Proverbs and Psalms. One of his most masterful works, *Hibbur Ha-Teshuvah*, is on the methods and value of repentance. He also wrote works dealing with legal and customary matters as well as liturgical and philosophical issues. When the Maimonidean controversy began to rage in Provence, he defended the philosophic approach to life, including the study of the natural sciences and rational philosophy.

Moses Ben Nahman (c. 1194–1274)

Ramban achieved lasting fame as a halakhist, Talmudic expositor, biblical commentator, and early Kabbalist. He also composed treatises on halakhic subjects not covered by Alfasi. His *Milhamot Ha-Shem* was a major undertaking that defended Alfasi against the perceptive critiques of Zerahiah Ha-Levi Gerondi's lengthy and penetrating *Meor*, while his *Sefer Zekhut* defended Alfasi against the onslaught of David of Posquieres (Rabad). He also defend the methods in the Halakhot Gedolot against the criticisms found in Maimonides *Sefer Ha-Mitzvot*, on which Ramban wrote an extensive commentary, differing with Maimonides on many issues. His encounter with Pablo Christaini in the Barcelona disputation is well known, and Ramban's summary of the debate is widely printed.

Ramban utilized the methods of German and French Tosafists and introduced into Spain their approach of brilliant harmonization of conflicting Talmudic passages. Solomon ben Abraham Adret (the Rashba) continued these methods and at the same time was a staunch adherent to the quite

different methods of Alfasi. Ramban created a synthesis between the French/German and Spanish schools, so that eventually the great German Talmudist, the Rosh, could gain a strong following in Spain. Ramban's magisterial command of the totality of Jewish learning, his exacting scholarship which pierced to the very heart of Talmudic methods and discerned the various chronological layers in the Talmudic texts, makes him a valuable source for the modern study of Talmud.

Kabbalistic works attributed to Ramban are those of contemporaries and not his. His great love for the Land of Israel (where he eventually settled) is reflected in many of his commentaries. He considered the commandments as more functional in the Land of Israel but still binding outside of the Land, if only to keep the method of practice vibrant among the people until they resettled there.

Meir Ben Barukh of Rothenberg (1215–1295)

Maharam of Rothenberg was a student of Jehiel of Paris and other Tosafists. His students wrote commentaries to the works of the great masters utilizing methods of analysis. Even when imprisoned and held for ransom for seven years he continued to lead the Jewish community and forbade them to pay his ransom, lest other scholars be captured and held hostage afterwards. His students, Moses Parnas and Samson ben Zadok, put together major works that Meir supervised during the prison years. The first is *Sefer Ha-Parnas*, the second *Sefer Tashbatz*. The responsa from the years of imprisonment were compiled from his amazing memory of the entire sea of Jewish learning. Thousands of his responsa are known, and his students cite his decisions constantly in their works. Four major volumes of his responsa are in print, but many works quote his other responsa. His comments to the Talmud are lost except for that on Yoma, which has been printed, as are some interpretations of various tractates from his major commentary to the Mishnah. While much has been lost or remains in manuscript, some of his smaller works were published, such as *Mahneh Leviah*, on the laws of mourning. His student, Moses Shneur, collected some responsa concerning various laws, which were published in *Ha-Goren* (1908). His liturgical hymns are still recited on the Ninth of Av. His students produced the major halakhic works of Ashkenazic Jewry: *Rosh, Mordecai, Or Zarua, Tashbatz*.

Joel Ben Isaac Ha-Levi (Twelfth-Thirteenth c.)

His son composed the book *Ravyah*, which preserves his father's responsa and some of his Talmudic commentaries. He was an eminent Tosafist, the student of Meir of Rothenberg. His liturgical poetry dating from the Second Crusade and commemorating the slaughters of Jews in the Rhineland are recited to this day. His major book, *Or Zaruah*, is a halakhic guide based on the order of the tractates of the Talmud. He was familiar with all the responsa of his own and preceding generations. His son produced an abridged version of his work. This work remains an important source for halakhah of the Middle-Ages.

Eliezer Ben Joel Ha-Levi of Bonn (1140–1225)

He was the teacher of the author of the *Or Zarua* (Isaac ben Moses) and the author of *Ravya* (or *Avi Ha-Ezri*), which analyzes legal decisions in the order they appear in the Talmud. He wrote many responsa and commentaries to the Talmud and Pentateuch, which were used by scholars throughout the Middle Ages. His responsa have been collected and published. He utilized the Palestinian Talmud in his researches.

Isaac Ben Joseph of Corbeil (d. 1280)

While the great code of Moses of Coucy, the *Sefer Mitzvot Gadol*, was a work of importance for the masters of scholars, the short work by Isaac ben Joseph, called *Amudei Golah* or *Sefer Mitzvot Qatan*, was aimed at

lay people. Divided into seven sections, laymen could study a part each day. It contained short notices on the many laws of Judaism and did not enter into analytical discussion and abstract principles but rather presented the laws succinctly.

Solomon Ben Abraham Adret (1235–1310)

The head of Spanish Jewry, known as Rashba, he opposed philosophical works that he thought undermined the authority of Rabbinic teaching. He put to death, through due process, an informer to the Christian authorities. His Talmudic commentaries and responsa (about 3000 are extant) are widely read to this day. His commentaries were not only brilliant expositions of halakhah but also of the lore found in the Talmud. Jacob ben Habib cites the latter in his *Eyn Yaacov* commentary to the lore of the Talmud.

Rashba's major halakhic work, constantly cited by decisors, is *Torat Ha-Bayit*. Critical comments were written by his colleague Aaron Ha-Levi (Rahah), called *Bedek Ha-Bayit*, which Rashba in turn anonymously criticized in his *Mishmeret Ha-Bayit*. Rashba wrote a work on the laws of Sabbath and festivals, called *Avodat Ha-Bayit*, and some other works.

Mordecai Ben Hillel Ha-Kohen (1240–1298)

The prominent student of Maharam of Rothenberg and Rabbenu Peretz of Corbeil, his major work is a compendium based on the discussions of halakhic material distilled in the great work of Alfasi. To depict the laws as practiced in France and Germany, he assembled the writings of the most prominent Ashkenazic legal decisors. His full work is very detailed and lengthy and only connected to Alfasi's work as a way of organizing his topics. His work has been edited into longer and shorter versions. The original has not been preserved well, although some manuscripts exist that are much less corrupt than what has been printed.

Moses Ben Jacob of Coucy (c. 1240–1300)

His great code, known as *Smag*, that is, the *Sefer Mitzvot Gadol*, categorized all commandments under the rubric of 365 negative prohibitions and 248 positive injunctions. After the great conflagration of the Talmud following the forced disputation of Jehiel of Paris with Donin, Moses composed the *Smag* to serve as a replacement for the Talmud, study of which was now banned in France. He thought Maimonides' great code was insufficient, for it failed to prove its assertions by citing the necessary sources, and it utilized a different approach to Talmudic study from that of the Tosafists. Moses also included aggadic materials to make the reading more enjoyable. His work became a classic throughout the generations of Jewish scholarship and still is cited by modern decisors. He also wrote a full body of comments to the Talmud, of which those to tractate Yoma have been preserved under the title *Tosafot Yeshanim*. He set out what he saw as the great threats to Jewish survival in his day: intermarriage and neglect of the basic rituals of phylacteries, fringes, and mezuzah.

Asher Ben Jehiel (1250–1327)

Rosh, also known as Asheri, was a renowned German talmudist who spread the Tosafists' approach to Talmud study when he came to Spain. He synthesized Ashkenazic and Spanish halakhic practices. His extant responsa number well over a thousand and reveal much about the process of halakhic development in western Europe. His major halakhic work, *Piskei Ha-Rosh*, summarized the conclusions of previous codifiers and commentators. As Alfasi had done, he arranged the halakhot in the order of the Talmudic tractates in which they appeared.

He composed commentaries to orders Tohorot and Zeraim of the Mishnah and compiled interpretations to the Babylonian Talmud that are more extensive than the ones printed on the Talmudic page. At times he incorporated the views of Spanish scholars and also of Meir of Rothenberg. He

was the author of an ethical work, known as *Hanhagot Ha-Rosh* or *Orhot Hayyim*, which set down the rules for proper behavior in the home and community.

Among the best of the commentaries to *Piskei Ha-Rosh* is *Korban Netanel* by Nethanel ben Naphtali Zevi Weil (b. 1687) on Seder Moed and Nashim. His comments often have been incorporated into current legal practice. He wrote many responsa as well.

Isaac Ben Meir Dueren (Died c. 1390)

His major work, *Shaarei Dura*, deals with the laws of kashrut and menstruation. Later decisors regarded it as one of the highest authorities, and many wrote commentaries to it. Isaac also wrote a book of customs for the whole year, published as *Minhagim Mi-Kol Ha-Shannah*, and commentaries to some Talmudic tractates.

Yom Tov Ben Abraham Ishbili (1250–1330)

The Ritva was the student of the spiritual leader of Spain, Solomon ben Abraham Adret. He composed a brilliant analytical commentary to almost the entire Babylonian Talmud, although as of yet not all of it has been printed. He also wrote commentaries to the halakhic compendium of Alfasi and the major halakhic treatises of Nahmanides, most of which have not yet been printed. Many of his halakhic works and his commentary to *Sefer Yetzirah* have not been preserved. He had a penchant for Kabbalistic thought but, in his *Sefer Ha-Zikharon*, did not hesitate to defend the philosophical, non-Kabbalistic positions of Maimonides against his detractors.

Jeroham Ben Meshullam (c. 1290–1350)

This great halakhic master was a student of the Rosh. His written works include *Sefer Mesharim* and *Toldot Adam ve-Hava*, a discussion of all laws from birth to death. It was used as an authority by the major decisors and codifiers.

Nissim Ben Reuben Gerondi (1310–1375)

The Ran was the greatest scholar of his period and answered questions from Jewish communities everywhere. Seventy-five of his responsa have been preserved along with fourteen tractates of his great commentary on Alfasi's compendium, published beside it in almost every edition of the Talmud. (The comments on Moed Katan and Makkot are mistakenly attributed to him.) His commentary to Nedarim also is printed on the page, although, with few exceptions, his commentaries to other tractates remain in manuscript. His book of philosophic expositions, called *Derashot Ha-Ran*, shows him to be an able philosopher in the Jewish-Aristotelian mode. Many of Ran's ideas are contained in the responsa of Isaac ben Sheshet, his outstanding student.

Isaac Ben Sheshet Perfet (1326–1408)

The Rivash was the major decisor in Spain in the fourteenth century. He was a student of Nissim Gerondi and Hasdai Crescas. During the horrendous persecutions in Spain he fled to Algiers. His collected responsa have remained masterpieces, and his decisions and commentaries are mentioned by every major decisor. His Talmudic commentaries and his work on the Pentateuch have not survived.

David Ben Joseph Abudarham (Fourteen Century)

This magisterial scholar wrote an extensive commentary on the content and customs connected with prayer, *Sefer Abudarham* (1340). Working from an original copy of the prayer book of Saadiah Gaon, Abudarham commented on the various prayers and the rituals connected with their recitation according to the Talmud, the geonim, and other authoritative decisors. He preserved French, Spanish, German, and Provencal variants of prayers and practices. He also wrote liturgical poems and a commentary, *Tashlum Abudarham*, on the Yom Kippur liturgy.

Simeon Bar Zemah Duran (1361–1444)

The Rashbatz was a towering figure in Talmudic and legal study, with close to a thousand of his responsa preserved in the *Sefer Tashbatz*. His method was to elucidate every aspect of a case, looking at the question historically, socially, and legally, so that his responsa contain a wealth of historical information. He wrote treatises about ritual slaughter (*Yavin Shemuah*), a commentary to the Haggadah of Passover, and Talmudic commentaries (*Hidushei Ha-Rashbatz*). Besides his halakhic writings he has left us some major philosophic works, such as *Or Ha-Hayyim* and *Leviat Hen*, voicing opposition to some of the ideas of Crescas and Levi ben Gershom. His *Zohar Ha-Rakia* defends Maimonides' ideas in *Sefer Ha-Mitzvot* against Nahmanides' assaults. His commentary to Job is called *Ohev Mishpat*, and he wrote a polemic against Christianity and Islam, called *Keshet Magen*. He also wrote liturgical poetry and a major work of theology discussing such topics as revelation and the nature of God.

Jacob Ben Moses Moellin (1360–1427)

Known as the Maharil, he was accepted as the foremost Jewish religious authority in Western Europe. His major work, *Sefer Maharil*, a collection of customs that he gathered and explained, was transcribed and edited by one of his students. This work was unprecedented and was used by subsequent legal authorities such as the Rama to establish prevailing custom in western and eastern European communities. Much of his writing has been lost.

Israel Ben Pethahiah Isserlein (1390–1460)

Known as the Maharai, this great grandson of Israel of Kreimz wrote the *Hagahot Asheri* (notes on the halakhic compendium of the Rosh utilizing *Or Zarua* and other works) and was the head of a famous academy in Neustadt. He led a life of abstinence and piety. One of his students recorded his customs and manner of living in a work called *Leqet Yoshar*. Isserlein's magnum opus, *Trumat Ha-Deshen* is cited by the major authorities. It contains 354 responsa that deal with many matters that no one else had ever discussed prior to him. The appendix to the work contains another 267 of his responsa that were edited by one of his students. Some of his works are now lost, but his comments concerning Rashi's commentary on the Torah was printed under the title *Beurim*.

Aharonim

The period of the Aharonim—later commentators—is characterized by the work of organizing and systemizing the ideas of the Rishonim. An important aspect of this activity was the use of the methods of the Baalei Ha-Tosafot to explain Talmudic problems and to make sense of the diverse legal decisions of the Rishonim. This was done by pointing out fine legal distinctions and proposing limiting circumstances in order to resolve apparent contradiction in the cases presented in the Talmud and earlier commentators. The result was an impetus to create novel interpretations and the emergence of a new method, *pilpul*, which attracted many fine minds and produced a spate of works. Many commentaries to Rishonim now appeared. Additionally, Caro's *Shulhan Arukh* engendered a host of commentaries, which either supplemented the work or argued with Caro's approach. A spiral of additional analysis of the sources and interpretations of the Code ensued. Elijah, the Gaon of Wilna, by contrast, developed fine tools for analyzing the Talmuds and Rishonim and, in the end, opposed excessive *pilpul*-analysis. The Hassidic master Shneur Zalman of Lyady, although thoroughly hassidic in his approach to custom and theology, exhibits an affinity for the legal analysis of the Gaon in his *Shulhan ArukhHa-Rav* and places his code in the forefront of halakhic digests for the layman.

With the Enlightenment, the stresses on traditional life were met by Aharonim who rallied around the *Shulhan Arukh* as the basis of Jewish life. But the Code and its

commentaries became too unwieldy for the average layman, so that other abbreviated codes soon appeared, such as *Hayye Adam* and the later *Kitzur Shulhan Arukh*. The responsa literature continued to grow, as the leaders of the generation were left to settle many issues introduced by modernity and modern technology: how, for instance, were electric lights, automobiles, elevators, and new food-processing techniques to be treated under Jewish law? Modern decisors of halakhah are quite conservative, and they have not dared to follow the path of those Aharonim who introduced new laws based on common practice. They focus instead upon the Babylonian Talmud, the writings of the major Rishonim who are cited by the Aharonim, and the works of the outstanding Aharonim. The halakhic midrashim, the Palestinian Talmud, newly published manuscripts of Rishonim, and critical historical methods—all tools utilized in modern Talmudic research—are generally ignored as irrelevant to the thrust of traditional halakhic momentum, which is rooted in the printed texts of the commentaries of the Rishonim.

For the most part, because of space constraints, we do not here mention the extensive legal and Talmudic traditions of Sephardic and Yemenite Jews in the period of the Aharonim. It is to be noted that while Rabbinic authority was removed in Ashkenazic communities in Eastern and Western Europe in the 1800s, so that modern responsa were limited in the area of civil law, Sephardic and Yemenite rabbis continued to deal with all areas of law. Their responsa thus are very important. Ovadya Yosef, a current Sephardic rabbi, enjoys high status among his Ashkenazic colleagues for his mastery of precedents in Sephardic law as well as for his knowledge of Ashkenazic authorities.

David Ben Solomon Ibn Abi Zimra (1480–1573)

Radbaz was the Chief Rabbi of Egypt. He introduced the practice of counting years on documents from the *Anno Mundi* as was the custom in the West, and he reintroduced the silent recitation of prayer that Maimonides had abolished in Egypt. He left there and resettled in the Holy Land, where he had first gone after he was expelled from Spain in the great expulsion of 1492. His printed responsa number close to 2500, but there are more in manuscript. He deals with questions of every type, and his personal authority is stamped in every answer. He defended the study of philosophy and science and was an avid student of Kabbalah himself, so that his commentaries are in a Kabbalistic manner. His comments on issues in Talmudic study are cited in *Shita Mekubetzet* by Bezalel Ashkenazi, his student. *Keter Malkhut*, his work on the liturgy for Yom Kippur, remains very popular.

Obadiah Ben Abraham Yare of Bertinoro (1447–1505)

His work on the Mishnah is the standard commentary in the major printed editions. He based it on the discussions of the Mishnah found in the Babylonian Talmud, and he often cited Rashi's comments verbatim. His commentary to the Torah is also well known. He composed a commentary to Abot and a book, *Or Amim*, which was translated into Latin, that argued that Aristotelian philosophy is opposed to the basic tenets of Judaism.

Jacob Ibn Habib (Died c. 1516)

This Castillian scholar fled the Spanish persecution of 1492 and settled in Salonica. He excerpted all the midrashic and aggadic materials from the Babylonian Talmud, from beginning to end, and wrote an extensive commentary to them, called *Eyn Yaacov*. He composed his own interpretation by citing the major Talmudic commentaries and then adding his own ideas. After his death, the work was carried on by his son. He wrote much, and his halakhic commentaries to the *Tur* are preserved in citations by Joseph Caro other major scholars.

Moses Cordovero (1522–1570)

Focusing upon Talmudic and legal commentators, we have not discussed important figures such as Moses de Leon, whose role in the production of the Zohar cannot be minimized, or Israel Baal Shem Tov, the founder of the Hassidic Movement. Still, we cannot ignore the special contributions of Moses Cordovero, known as Ramac, whose role is pivotal in the history of Jewish understanding of sacred texts. Ramac was the student of Joseph Caro, the composer of the *Shulhan Arukh*, and of the great Kabbalist Solomon Alkabez. His students were the powers behind the school of Lurianic Kabbalah in Sefad, which wholly integrated Kabbalah into a halakhic framework. What is generally viewed as the great, new impulse of Isaac Luria—the Ari—was already expounded, without detail, by Ramac: the mystical doctrines of *tzimtzum*, the four levels or worlds of emanation, and the configurations of the *sefirot*. The Ari developed and refined these ideas and became the master teacher of the new movement in Kabbalah. Ramac's *Or Yakar* is a complete commentary to the *Zohar*, and he wrote many other books as well, such as *Or Ha-Shamayim, Sefer Shiur Ha-Koma, Tfilah le-Moshe, Or Neerav*, and *Tamar Devora*. Sermons of his and a commentary to the Pentateuch remain in manuscript, as yet unpublished.

Isaac Ben Solomon Luria Ashkenazi (1534–1572)

The Holy Ari was the foremost master of Kabbalistic doctrines. His teachers were the illustrious David ben Zimra, known as Radbaz, and Bezalel Ashkenazi, compiler of the *Shita Mekubetzet*. He was given to spending long periods of time in silence and meditation and had a penchant for telling future events. When Luria came to Sefad in the Holy Land to hear the lectures of Moses Cordovero, the foremost expositor of the Zohar, he fulfilled his life's wish. Cordovero, however, passed away shortly after the two met. Luria's students spread their master's customs and ideas far and wide, and his halakhic ideas were incorporated into his own teacher's *Shita Mekubetzet*. His student, Hayyim ben Joseph Vital, wrote *Etz Hayyim* further to circulate the teachings of Rabbi Luria.

Luria laid stress upon the doctrines of reincarnation of the soul and the coming of the messiah through the perfection of the soul and the cosmic orders tied to the soul. Over 25 Kabbalistic works have been attributed to him, whether directly or through the records of his students. He stands behind unique forms of liturgy, distinctive shapes of letters in Torah scrolls, and special Kabbalistic meditations.

Joseph Ben Ephraim Caro (1488–1575)

The author of the great code of Jewish law, the *Shulhan Arukh*, first gained prominence with his *Beit Yosef*, a commentary on the *Arbaah Turim* of Jacob ben Asher. Caro's purpose was to standardize Jewish practice by researching every law from its Talmudic origin through its divergent interpretations and variant practices in later Jewish communities, concluding with a decisive ruling on how the law ought to be observed. To decide among divergent customs, Caro turned to the opinions of Alfasi, Rambam, and the Rosh, defining normative practice as the majority opinion of the three. Because Alfasi and Maimonides were both of the Spanish tradition, the *Beit Yosef* minimized the opinions of Ashkenazic scholars. Caro also composed *Kesef Mishneh*, a commentary to eight books of Maimonides' *Mishneh Torah*. In it he often reads the understanding of Tosafot and Rashi into the words of Maimonides. In addition to two volumes of responsa and *Avkat Rokhel*, Caro wrote two books published posthumously: *Kelalei Ha-Talmud*, on Talmudic methodology, and *Bedek Bayit*, which contains corrections and supplements to the *Beit Yosef*.

Moses Ben Israel Isserles (c. 1527–1572)

The esteemed giant of Polish legal minds, Rama reacted in a fine, critical manner to the masterful works of Joseph Caro. In his

Darkei Moshe, Rama adroitly wrote improvements to Caro's complex and detailed masterpiece, the *Beit Yosef*. His *Mapa* not only explains the *Shulhan Arukh* but also adds views other than Caro's, especially appending the fixed customs of Ashkenazic Jewry. In this way, Isserles radically altered the thrust of Caro's code. He wrote another great work, *Torat Ha-Olah*, to explore the philosophical, mystical aspect of Jewish ceremonial laws, especially those connected to the Jerusalem Temple. His Kabbalistic writings, like his commentaries to the Zohar and to Talmudic tractates, remain in manuscript, unpublished. His work on Jewish ritual law, *Torat Hatat*, his collected responsa, and his commentary to the book of Esther have proven very popular.

Moses of Trani (1500–1580)

He was in dialogue with Joseph Caro, whom he replaced as chief judge, and also communicated with Radbaz, Bezalel Ashkenazi, Moses Alshekh, and others. His well over 800 responsa are important historical documents as well as learned decisions in Jewish law. His *Kiryat Sefer* deals with the arrangement of Maimonides' *Mishneh Torah*, and his *Beit Elohim* is an important theological work on faith and prayer.

Azariah Ben Moses del Rossi (1511–1578)

His work on the history of the Jews utilizes the critical methodologies of the renaissance rather than the methods of folklore and legend common among his Rabbinic colleagues. His major study, *Meor Eynaim*, establishes a chronology of second temple times and the Jewish sects of that period. He sought archaeological evidence and rejected Talmudic calculation as a credible way of determining truth when there was counter evidence. He was sharply rebuked by many of his colleagues, and there was a ban against his works. But they were read and eventually helped pave the way for the Jewish Enlightenment.

Bezalel Ben Abraham Ashkenazi (1520–1592)

A student of Radbaz, he was the major legal decisor in Egypt and the teacher of the Ari. His *Asafat Zekenim* became known as *Shita Mekubetzet* and preserves the interpretations of major Talmudic commentators from the ninth to the thirteenth century. His work was completed by great scholars, so that most of the Talmudic tractates could be studied with the aid of one major commentary. Nevertheless, his work on some tractates still is unpublished. His emendations of *Seder Qodashim* are printed in standard Talmud editions. Some of his responsa have been published; other works of his are lost.

Solomon Luria (1510–1573)

The Maharshal is the famed author of *Yam Shel Shelomo*, a Talmudic commentary studied widely in Europe and today in Lithuanian style Yeshivot in Israel and the U.S.A. He lays out the threads of legal decisors and their decisions for sixteen tractates, explaining how they interpreted passages in the Talmud to arrive at their understandings of the law. Providing a wealth of sources unknown to us from other places, he tested current laws against their original sources to proclaim them valid or invalid. In his important *Hokhmat Shelomo* he emends and corrects the texts of the Talmud, Rashi, and Tosafot by eliminating copyist and printing errors. He also emended the works of Alfasi, Rosh, Rambam, *Smag*, *Tur*, and the common prayer-book. His *Yeriat Shelomo* is a super-commentary on Rashi's commentary to the Torah; his *Amudei Shelomo* is a commentary to the *Smag*; and *Ateret Shelomo* is a commentary to *Shaarei Dura*.

Judah Loew Ben Bezalel (c. 1520–1609)

Known as Maharal of Prague, he was a master talmudist and theologian of Polish or German extraction. At his final Rabbinic post, in Prague, he established a renowned

Talmudic academy, which brought him to the notice of all. His originality shines through his treatises on God, Israel, exile, and redemption—the major themes of Jewish thought. His works include a concise supercommentary on Rashi's commentary to the Pentateuch, known as *Gur Aryeh*; a highly intricate work on Jewish theosophy of the Exodus (and the Passover Haggadah), called *Gevurot Ha-Shem*; and his commentary to Abot in *Derekh Hayyim*, which is philosophically intricate. His responsa remain of interest, and his mastery of halakhah is evident in his *Tiferet Yisrael* as well as in his work on moral instruction, *Netivot Olam*. One gets a sense of his homiletic genius in his works on Esther (*Or Hadash*) and Hannuka (*Ner Mitzvah*). His study of redemption, *Netzah Yisrael*, is major work of theology. Some of his sermons have been published as have some of his legal works, notably on the *Tur*, *Yoreh Deah*, and Talmudic tractates of Moed (also called *Gur Aryeh*).

His influence is apparent on his student Yom Tov Lipmann Heller, who commented on the Mishnah and Talmud, as well as in the legal works of major decisors such *Magen Avraham*, *Bah* (*Bayit Hadash*), and *Taz* (*Turei Zahav*); his mystical directions are evident in the works of the masters of Hassidei Gur and Isaac Abraham Kook. A pedagogue, he established a curriculum that proceeded from the study of all of Scripture and its grammar to the Mishnah and then, in the mid-teenage years, to the Talmud. That program had already been recorded in Mishnah Abot as the proper sequence. The legend of the Golem of Prague shows the Maharal to have been in the popular imagination a towering figure of piety and learning.

Mordecai Ben Abraham Jaffe (1530–1612)

Taught by Solomon Luria and Moses Isserles, the two central legal minds in Poland, he was well schooled in the natural sciences and in Kabbalistic works. He wrote commentaries to Maimonides' *Guide for the Perplexed* and the laws of new moons as well as other books that required scientific knowledge. He also wrote a commentary to the Kabbalistic writings of Recanati, to the Torah commentary of Rashi, and other works as well. He wrote magnificent halakhic works based on the *Tur*. These presented the various laws according to definitive principles he had rigorously determined from his study of the Talmud and subsequent halakhic authorities. Collectively called *Levushim*, these works were the subject of commentaries by fine halakhic authorities. They remain standard references for modern decisors. However, *Levushim* was not printed in many editions, since Caro's briefer *Shulhan Arukh* was fixed as the accepted authority by Sephardic communities, and, as glossed by Moshe Isserles, by Ashkenazic communities as well.

Joshua Falk (c. 1550–1614)

The author of *Sefer Meirat Eynaim* on *Shulhan ArukhHoshen Mishpat*, and *Prisha* and *Drisha* on *Tur Shulhan Arukh*, his critical notes and corrections were esteemed and accepted as authoritative. A few of his responsa are preserved in *Geonei Batraye* and *Bayit Hadash*. Lost are his Talmudic novellae, commentaries to the Rif and the Ran, his Kabbalistic writings, his biblical commentaries, and his responsa. He had studied under the greatest scholars of his age, Solomon Luria and Moses Isserles. His daughter, Beila, also was known as a halakhist, and her legal opinions were entertained by the leading authorities of the times.

Meir Ben Gedaliah of Lublin (1558–1616)

A prominent scholar, he is referred to as the Maharam Lublin. His son collected some of his responsa and published them under the name *Manhir Eynei Hakhamim*. His major work, comments to the entire Babylonian Talmud, is printed in standard editions, under the title *Meir Eynei Hakhamim*. His other works were never published: a commentary to the entire *Tur*, another to the

Sefer Mitzvot Gadol, and other homiletic and legal works. Maharam opposed using codes to decide the law, maintaining that only one who knows the entire Talmudic literature can understand how to apply legal principles to individual cases.

Joel Sirkes (1561–1640)

He is known as the *Bah* after his classic work on the *Tur*, called *Bayit Hadash*. He analyzes the sources of each law in the *Tur* and decides its proper application according to the logic of the Talmudic system. He intended to justify community practices that seemed at odds with the written, legal traditions, e.g., the prohibition against eating winter wheat before the second day of Passover. A master talmudist and legal decisor, his work is noted in every intricate legal decision to this day. His students were David Ha-Levi (author of the *Turei Zahav*), Menahem Mendel Krochmal, and Menahem Mendel Auerbach (author of *Ateret Zekenim*). He insisted that Talmudic scholars had to be proficient in Hebrew language and grammar, and he set up a curriculum similar to that of the Maharal of Prague. His contributions to Talmudic studies are staggering. He wrote critical notes (called *Hagahot Ha-Bah*) to correct copyists errors he identified in the texts of the Talmud, the Rosh, the *Tur*, the *Beit Yosef*, the *Shulhan Arukh*, and the Rama. We have two volumes of his collected responsa, which for the most part reveal a liberal and lenient approach to some areas of Jewish law. Besides his notes to Falk's *Meor Eyneim*, called *Quntres Aharon*, he composed notes to the Mishnah's commentators: Maimonides, Samson of Sens, and Rabad. He also wrote biblical commentaries, *Meshiv Nefesh* to Ruth and *Beer Mayim* to Rashi's commentary to the Pentateuch, and *Shealot u-Teshovot Bayit Hadash*. His Kabbalistic works, novellae to the Talmud, treatise on the *Shulhan Arukh*, and liturgical commentaries still await publication.

David Ben Samuel Ha-Levi (1586–1667)

Forced to flee persecutions, wars, and upheavals, he journeyed from city to city. He often cites his father-in-law, the Bah. He wrote a super-commentary to Rashi's interpretation of the Torah, called *Divre David*, and composed a work called *Daf Aharon* to defend himself against the attacks of Shabbetai Ha-Kohen (the Shach). His major work, a commentary to the entire *Shulhan Arukh*, is all in print. The best known sections are on *Orah Hayyim*, called *Magen David* (published together with the *Magen Avraham* commentary as *Meginei Aretz*), and to *Yoreh Deah*, called *Turei Zahav*, on which basis David was simply called the Taz. The *Turei Zahav* was printed with the commentary of the Shach in a volume known as *Ashlei Ravravi*. Later in his life he wrote further clarifications to his commentaries on *Orah Hayyim* and *Yoreh Deah*.

Isaiah Horowitz (1560–1630)

A Talmud student under Joshua Falk, he learned Kabbalah from the son of Hayyim Vital. Thus combining the best talents of talmudist and Kabbalist, he achieved lasting fame through his magisterial *Shnei Luhot Ha-Brit*. This work analyzes the entire range of commandments using philosophical, ethical, and Kabbalistic methods. In the process Horowitz gives detailed information concerning the proper method of performing every commandment and custom. He also wrote a commentary to the *Sefer Mordecai* on Seder Moed (called *Bigdei Yesha*), composed notes to the *Zohar*, produced legal works such as the laws of phylacteries, and authored a prayer book with commentary, *Shaar Ha-Shamayim*. His life was filled with turmoil and persecution, and he was even held hostage for a time.

Samuel Eliezer Edels (1555–1631)

This master commentator, known as Maharsha, wrote his *Hidushe Halakhot* to expound the sense of Rashi's or Tosafists' comments

to the Talmud. Maharsha clarifies, explains, and even emends texts, so that students gain a lucid grasp of the Talmudic passage. In his *Hidushe Aggadot* he goes to great lengths to clarify Talmudic stories and to fit them into the matters at hand. His ethical and moral teachings are framed in these works. The greatness of these works was so evident that they are published in all standard editions of the Talmud. He had a fine critical mind and was able to see that the Targum of Pseudo-Jonathan was not composed by the translator of the prophets. He also discerned later glosses in the works of Rashi and Tosafot, and he emended the texts accordingly. He wrote other works, but his Talmudic commentaries are crucial for the understanding of the Talmud. For the student, these rank in usefulness next to those of Rashi and the Baalei Ha-Tosafot.

Menahem Mendel Ben Abraham Krochmal (1600–1661)

The Zemah Zedek studied together with David Ha-Levi under the tutelage of Joel Sirkes. A champion of social justice, he introduced many economic and social reforms for the Jews of Moravia. Many of his writings were lost in a fire. His responsa, *Sheelot u-Teshwot Zemah Zedek*, cover the entire range of the *Shulhan Arukh* of Joseph Caro and remain an important source for modern decisors.

Yom Tov Lipmann Ben Nathan Ha-Levi Heller (1579–1654)

The famed student of the Maharal of Prague, his work shows a masterful Hebrew style of intricate grammatical constructions. His commentaries also reveal a wide knowledge of mathematics and the natural sciences as well as of philosophical and legal works. An ardent Kabbalist, he offered many original interpretations in his commentary to the Mishnah, *Tosafot Yom Tov*.

He composed a guide, in Yiddish, for salting meat (*Brit Meleh*), which was abridged and printed in many standard editions of the Mishnah. His major halakhic contributions are massive commentaries to the Rosh, known as *Maadnei Yom Tov, Divrei Hamudot*, and *Pilpulei Harifta*. He composed works on the architecture of the temple and other works including an autobiography, *Megillat Eyvah*. He also wrote critical notes to the *Levush Orah Hayyim*. Unprinted as of yet are many works on Kabbalah, commentaries to medieval works, legal works, parts of his commentaries to the Rosh, and even a supercommentary to Abraham ibn Ezra's commentary to the Pentateuch.

Shabbetai Ben Meir Ha-Kohen (1621–1662)

The Shach wrote extensive commentaries to *Yoreh Deah* and *Hoshen Mishpat* of the *Shulhan Arukh*. This work, called *Siftei Kohen*, encompassed the entire literature of Jewish law, and his decisions were based on clear reasoning, not simply the chain of accepted and authoritative decisors. In a perceptive work called *Nekudot Ha-Kesef*, he criticized the commentary of *Turei Zahav* on *Yoreh Deah*. The author of *Turei Zahav*, David ben Samuel Ha-levi, defended himself in *Daf Aharon*, and Shabbetai refuted this response in his *Kuntres Aharon*. In future years the greatest minds debated his positions, so that he is the subject of much controversy in the legal literature. Living during the persecutions of 1648, when whole communities were butchered, he wrote dirges to commemorate their slaughter. An account of the great tragedy is in his *Megillat Afah*. His commentary to the *Tur Yoreh Deah* is in print. His long work *Takfo Kohen* was abridged by Jonathan Eybeschuetz, who added his own commentary to it. Shabbtai also authored a commentary to the Passover Haggadah and wrote other works, such as *Poel Tzedek*, concerning the *Sefer Ha-Mitzvot* of Maimonides.

Abraham Abele Gombiner (1637–1683)

In his lifetime, Abraham was not a world renowned scholar but a simple teacher of children. But when he died, his son sought to publish his commentary to the *Shulhan*

Arukh, which he called *Magen Avraham*. The publisher was so amazed by the work that he printed it together with the commentary of David Ha-Levi on the very pages of the *Shulhan Arukh* itself. Subsequently, all standard editions of the *Shulhan Arukh* have come to be printed that way. The commentary does four major things: 1) It explains the rulings of Caro and Isserles, in instances of discrepancies usually deciding in favor of Isserles and arguing frequently against the rulings of Mordecai Jaffe's *Levush*. 2) It enhances all legal codes by citing Kabbalistic customs, which were becoming widespread, and introducing them into the accepted practice. 3) It reviewed the entire tradition of law and fills in omissions in the works of Caro and Isserles. 4) It introduces an ethical and moral dimension relevant to the performance of the laws. Alongside the approaches of Caro and Isserles, this work became the standard for all practice in subsequent generations.

Abraham also penned the *Zayit Raanan* commentary to Yalkut Shimoni. This work examined older commentaries and showed which were more accurate. An abridged form is printed in standard editions of Yalkut Shimoni.

Jacob Ben Samuel Hagiz (1620–1674)

This Sephardic sage was the head of the most famous academy in the Land of Israel and produced many exceptional Talmudic scholars. His major work was *Etz Hayyim*, a commentary to the entire Mishnah. His *Halakhot Ketanot* contains his many responsa. In his *Tehilat Hokhmah* he organized the principles necessary for a clear understanding of the Talmud. He composed around twenty works, of which only ten have been printed. He is the author of a major commentary to the Shulhan Arukh known as *Lehem Ha-Panim*.

Moses Ibn Jacob Hagiz (1672–1751)

His great works covered law and lore, biblical commentary, and ethics. He was an expert linguist and proficient in the natural sciences. He is best known for his *Leket Ha-Kemah*, a commentary to half of Caro's *Shulhan Arukh*, his *Shetei Ha-Lechem*, responsa to all areas of law, as well as for his comments to the Mishnah, called *Zikharon li-Vnei Yisrael*. His *Eleh Ha-Mitzvot* is an exposition of the 613 commandments of the Torah as compiled by Maimonides. He wrote many other books, but the most interesting is his *Sfat Emet*, in which he talks about the great spiritual value of living in the Land of Israel.

Isaac Hezekiah Lampronti (1679–1756)

A renowned physician and Italian halakhist, he composed an encyclopedia of halakhah, called *Pahad Yitzhak*, arranged alphabetically, in which he cites and analyzes the responsa of scholars on many topics. The work remains a classic until this day. Many other works of his still remain in unpublished.

Jacob Joshua Ben Zevi Hirsch Falk (1680–1756)

Known as the Pnei Yehoshua, after the name of his magnum opus commenting on the Talmud, he was the great great grandson on his mother's side of Joshua Heschel and is also the author of responsa and the *Meginei Shelomo*, a work defending Rashi's commentary against the questions raised by the Baalei Ha-Tosafot. Because of his uncompromising nature, Falk was forced to leave Poland and take up posts in Germany. His wife was also an accomplished Talmudic scholar. His Talmudic commentaries are major sources of discourses in the world of Jewish learning to this very day. Unfortunately his commentaries to several tractates remain unpublished, as do his collected responsa and his commentary to the Pentateuch.

Jonathan Eybeschuetz (1690–1764)

The master of Prague's most illustrious Talmudic academy, Eyebschuetz was one of the most prodigious minds to influence the Jews of Poland, Austria, and Germany in

the eighteenth century. He was a master of Talmud and all legal works, but also of Zohar, Kabbalah, and the natural sciences. His amulets were thought to contain allusions to the infamous messianic pretender, Shabbetai Zevi. Jacob Emden sought to prove he was a follower of the banned sect of Shabbateans, and there may be some truth to those allegations. Although he was cleared of wrong-doings by formal inquiries, his son, Wolf, publicly admitted he was a follower of the banned sect, and a Shabbatean work was ascribed to him.

Eyebschuetz's legal works, mainly edited by his students, include the well known *Kreti u-Fleti* on *Tur Yoreh Deah, Urim ve-Tumim* on *Hoshen Mishpat, Bnei Ahuvim* on Maimonides' laws of marriage and divorce, *Bina La-itim* on laws pertaining to festivals, and a couple of dozen more. His homiletic works include *Yearat Dvash, Tifferet Yehonaton, Ahavat Yehonaton*, and *Keshet Yehonaton*. *Shem Olam*, on Kabbalistic themes, has been attributed to him, and this work shows an affinity to the Shabbatean work mentioned above.

Jacob Ben Zevi Emden (1698–18th c)

Rabbi Emden, known as Yavetz, was a brilliant, critical scholar with a fiery personality. His *Mitpahat Sefarim* examines the classics of Judaism and comes to the conclusion that parts of the Zohar could not possibly come from Simeon bar Yochai, the reputed author of the Zohar. Besides such works, he wrote responsa (*Sheelat Yavetz*), a commentary on the Mishnah called *Lehem Shamayim*, a comprehensive prayer book for the entire year with legal notations, notes to selected Talmudic tractates, and many other works. He has even left us an autobiography, called *Megillat Sefer*.

Jair Hayyim Bacharach (1638–1702)

His *Etz Hayyim* contains nine separate works, the first of which is *Havat Yair*. His 238 responsa show his mastery of mathematics, science, and music. He wrote glosses to Alfasi's compendium, which are published in standard editions of the Talmud. He composed a commentary on tractate Hagigah, notes to Maimonides' *Guide*, a commentary to *Orah Hayyim* of the *Shulhan Arukh*, and some forty other works, most of which are not printed.

Moses Ben Simeon Margoliot (1715–1781)

He is best known as the author of *Pnei Moshe, a* commentary to the Talmud Yerushalmi. He exerted untiring efforts to ascertain the exact meaning of the Yerushalmi, deeply studying sources from the Land of Israel, such as the Tosefta, and delving into botanical sciences. (We know he took university courses at Frankfort to clarify passages in the Yerushalmi). He also composed *Mareh Panim*, which harmonizes apparent contradictions in the Yerushalmi. Modern scholars find his commentary at times too superficial, since it utilizes the Babylonian Talmud and its commentators as a frame through which to understand the Yerushalmi. Unfortunately we do not have his commentary *Beer Mayim Hayyim* to Babli tractates Shabbat and Erubin.

Aryeh Leib Ben Asher Gunzberg (1695–1785)

His *Shaagat Aryeh* presents 120 responsa to *Orah Hayyim*, utilizing acute analysis and finding fine distinctions. His Talmudic novellae, *Turei Even* and *Gevurat Ari*, and his collected responsa are widely cited in Rabbinic literature.

Elijah Ben Solomon Zalman (1720–1797)

The Gra, or Wilna Gaon, authored over seventy books and commentaries, including an interpretation of almost the entire bible. He wrote a commentary to several books of the Mishnah, called *Shnot Eliyahu*, and to the Mekhilta, Sifra, Sifre, both the Jerusalem and Babylonian Talmuds, as well as on parts of the Tosefta, the aggadot of the Talmud, Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer, Abot de Rabbi Natan, Pesikta, Seder Zuta Rabbah,

and Seder Olam Rabbah. His major work is a commentary to the entire *Shulhan Arukh*. A virulent opponent of Hassidism, he wrote extensively on Kabbalah, including commentaries to *Sefer Yetzira*, *Sefer Ha-Bahir*, *Sifra de Tzeniuta*, *Raaya Mehemna*, Zohar, and *Tikkunei Ha-Zohar*. He greatly influenced his student Hayyim ben Isaac of Volozhin (1749–1821), author of *Nefesh Ha-Hayyim* and *Ruah Hayyim* on Abot, who in 1802 founded a Yeshiva based on the methods of the Wilna Gaon. This determined the scholarly methods of analysis of Lithuanian scholarship until the brutal murders of Lithuanian Jewry in the 1940s.

Joseph Ben Meir Teomim (1727–1792)

Renowned in Poland and Germany as a halakhist, he wrote a commentary, *Pri Megaddim*, on works of the Taz, the Shach, and the Magen Avraham. He also wrote commentaries on Talmud tractates Yebamot, Ketubot, and Baba Qamma, known as *Porat Yosef*, as well as commentaries to Hulin (*Rosh Yosef*), to Berakhot, and to all of seder Moed. Of great importance is his *Ginat Veradim*, which sets forth seventy rules that are basic for understanding the methodology of the composition of the Babylonian Talmud. It is printed in most standard editions of the *Shulhan Arukh*. His *Rav Pnenim* collects his explanations of Scriptures. Many other works of his have not been printed, including commentaries to several Talmudic tractates. He wrote a dictionary of Hebrew and Aramaic and offered insights into the Pentateuch and Haftorot.

Ezekiel Ben Judah Landau (1713–1793)

Renowned for his piety and his learning, this Polish sage became the leading teacher and authority in his generation in Prague. He was the teacher of Abraham Danzig, the author of the very lucid code of Jewish law known as *Hayye Adam*. He subsisted on small morsels of food and fasted for long stretches of time. His method of learning was based on the methods of Rashi in the study of Talmud and Isserles in his methods of deciding halakhic norms. He established the *Shulhan Arukh* and the Rama as the foremost authorities to be followed and thereby began the process of unifying Jewish custom in Poland and Germany. He opposed the nascent hassidic movement and entered into disputations with its leaders. His printed works include *Sheelot u-Teshivut Nodeh be-Yehudah* (responsa), *Tsiun le-Nefesh Hayya*, extensive commentaries to tractate Berakhot, much of seder Moed, and all of seder Qodashim. Commentaries to tractates in seder Nezikin and seder Nashim remain unpublished. We have his *Degel mi-Revava* to the *Shulhan Arukh*, printed right on the page in many editions of that work. Extant also are various collections of his sermons and addresses and a work in German discussing the civil marriage laws of Kaiser Josef II of Austria.

Hayyim Joseph David Azulai (1724–1806)

Known as Hida, he was an extraordinarily gifted bibliophile, talmudist, decisor, and Kabbalist. His autobiography-diary, *Maagal Tov*, reports on five years of his travels. His major halakhic writings are found in *Birkei Yosef*, *Makhzik Berakha*, and *Shiyyurei Berakha*. But he is best known for his bibliographies, *Vaad la-Hakhamim* and *Shem Gedolim*. He prepared extensive folklore collections, biblical commentaries, sermons, and he mentions many works that he saw in manuscripts on his travels but which are no longer extant.

Aqiba Eiger Ben Moshe Guens (1761–1837)

A staunch opponent of the reform movement in Germany, this great Talmudic scholar used his great erudition and understanding to keep his community distant from the movement he saw as heretical. His own works show he had a keen and critical mind, and students such as Jacob Levy made important linguistic contributions to the study of Talmudic philology. Aqiba Eiger is best known for his brilliant notes to the Babylonian Talmud, called *Gilyon Ha-Shas*,

which are printed in the margins of standard editions. His glosses to the Palestinian Talmud, by contrast, have been lost. His responsa are widely used as are his glosses to the *Shulhan Arukh*. His published works include *Hilluka de-Rabbanan*, notes to the Mishnah, *Hiddushei Rabbi Akiva Eiger*, and novellae.

Moses Sofer (1762–1839)

Known as Hatam Sofer, the creator, in Pressburg, of the greatest Yeshiva in the world, he raised a generation of outstanding scholars who followed his opposition to the modernizing spirit of the reform movement and the liberalism of Moses Mendelssohn. He promoted the authority of the *Shulhan Arukh* as a means of standardizing religious practice, so that people could accurately be judged as "observant" or "non-observant." Today, his volumes of Talmudic and biblical commentary, his many volumes of collected responsa, and his ethical will are studied carefully by Yeshiva students the world over.

Israel Ben Gedaliah Lipschutz (1782–1860)

He wrote an extensive commentary to the entire Mishnah, called *Tiferet Yisrael*, and introduced each of the orders of Moed, Qodashim, and Tohorot by summarizing its principles. His main commentary, titled *Yakhin*, gives the plain meanings of the text; a more penetrating analysis appears in a second commentary, titled *Boaz*. He appended the pertinent halakhic rulings of the *Shulhan Arukh* at the end of each chapter, in a section titled *Hilkheta Gevirta*. His brief commentary on the Mishnah is called *Zera Yisrael*.

Joseph Ben Moses Babad (1800–1875)

He is the author of *Minhat Hinnukh* (1869), a commentary on the thirteenth century *Sefer Ha-Hinnukh*. Babad quotes halakhic authorities and commentators on each biblical commandment but does not attempt to arrive at any conclusions or determine the halakhah. His aim is simply to raise questions that challenge the reader, so as to stimulate further study of the principles, laws, and customs of the commandments.

Joseph Baer Soloveichik (1820–1892)

Known as the Beit Ha-Levi, he developed extremely acute methods of Talmudic analysis, which would be systematized and organized by his son, Rav Hayyim. He personally lacked those methodological skills. Many of his works have been published under the name *Beit Ha-Levi*, including comments on the Talmud, responsa, homiletic materials, and halakhah.

Naphtali Zevi Judah Berlin (1817–1893)

The Netziv was head of the Volozhin Yeshiva for over 40 years and was a leading halakhic authority of the nineteenth century. His method stressed study of the works of the geonim and Rishonim. His reputation was founded on his learned *Emek* commentaries to the Mechilta and Sifre as well as his *Haamek Sheelah* on the *Sheiltot* of the Gaon Rabbi Aha of Shabha. More popular among the masses is his *Haamek Davar*, a commentary to the Torah. He wrote a commentary on the Song of Songs, called *Rinnah shel Torah*, and wrote many responsa, a small number of which are published in *Meshiv Davar*. Unlike his colleague Hayyim of Brisk, he did not analyze Jewish laws by breaking them into precise qualitative components but rather by understanding them as functional and practical expressions of spiritual life.

Hayyim Soloveichik of Brisk (1853–1918)

Known simply as Rav Hayyim, he created from his father's methods an extremely powerful tool for analyzing all problems in the

Jewish legal literature, thus bringing a new trend to wide acceptance in Talmud study. He divided passages of the Talmud into component categories that he showed were operative everywhere. His methods, which offered new solutions to old problem, thus explained every Talmudic passage and even every commentator of note. Many of his commentaries to the Talmud have been printed as well as his analysis of topics in Maimonides' *Mishneh Torah.*

Israel Meir Ha-Kohen (Kagan) (1838–1933)

Hafetz Hayyim was popularly named after the title of his first book, on the importance of the laws prohibiting slander, talebearing, and gossip. His *Mishnah Berurah*, a commentary on *Orah Hayyim* of the *Shulhan Arukh*, is a comprehensive handbook devoted to practical halakhah for daily living. It remains his most highly regarded and most studied book. He was the author of 21 books, including *Mahaneh Yisrael*, a spiritual guide for the Jewish soldier in the Russian army; *Ahavat Hesed*, on charity; *Niddehei Yisrael*, an appeal for Jews who had left Eastern Europe to maintain their Jewish traditions and practices; and a number of other books devoted to daily observances, including Torah study and the dietary laws. He wrote a commentary to Sifra and encouraged the study of the order Qodashim, on the laws of the Temple. This subject had been neglected in the Lithuanian Yeshivot, and forecasting the approach of the Messianic Era he revitalized their study. He also was influential in the maintenance of Beth Jacob Schools for young women, so they would be able to withstand the lure of secularism and apostasy that was rife in Western Europe.

Abraham Isaac Kook (1865–1935)

A deeply philosophical and mystical thinker, he was attached to the Zionist cause, which he infused with the resources of Jewish tradition. His philosophic writings are masterpieces, about a dozen of which have been published. His halakhic responsa, legal writings, and treatises on a variety of subjects are very popular. Though his Talmudic works have not survived, his responsa concerning the observance of laws in the modern land of Israel are very important. He was a student of the Netziv.

Avraham Yeshayahu Karelitz (1878–1953)

He is known as the Hazon Ish, after the title of his first work, a commentary on the *Shulhan Arukh* focused primarily on *Orah Hayyim*, published anonymously in 1911. The depth and breadth of Karelitz's knowledge had a major impact on the Rabbinic world. Although he published few responsa, he was highly esteemed throughout the Jewish world as a halakhic authority and wrote over forty books on Jewish law.

Hayyim Ozer Grodzinski (1863–1940)

He wrote a three volume collection of responsa, entitled *Ahiezer*, which exercises much influence on current trends in Jewish law. His mastery of the whole tradition, his personal piety, and his untiring leadership of European Jewry established him as the leader of traditional Jewry after the death of Hafetz Hayyim.

Jehiel Michael Ben Aaron Isaac Ha-Levi Epstein (1829–1908)

Although he wrote novellae on the Talmud and responsa, his great fame derives from his *Arukh Ha-Shulhan*, which supplements the *Shulhan Arukh* by summarizing major rulings from the time of the Talmuds to the nineteenth century. His volume of laws dealing with the future, rebuilt Temple is called *Arukh Ha-Shulhan le-Atid.* Epstein was also the author of a commentary on Rabbenu Tam's *Sefer Ha-Yashar*, called *Or Yerushalayim*, and a commentary to the Passover Haggadah.

Baruch Ha-Levi Epstein (1860–1942)

He was the son of Jehiel Michael Epstein and the nephew of the Netziv. His *Torah Temimah* cites and analyzes relevant midrashic and Talmudic materials pertinent to each verse of the Pentateuch. He also wrote other books, such as a commentary on the liturgy, called *Barukh Sheamar*, and an autobiography, *Mekor Barukh*.

Isaac Ze'ev Ha-Levi Soloveichik (1866–1960)

He was the son of Rav Hayyim of Brisk. His students have passed on his teachings on the order of Qodashim and his other Talmudic lectures, which were based on the methods of his father.

Jehiel Jacob Weinberg (1855–1966)

One of the greatest decisors of the twentieth century, his four volume *Sridei Esh* discusses many modern problems. His *Mehkarim ba-Talmud* show a blend of approaches of traditional piety and modern methods of Talmudic research. He esteemed the works of David Zevi Hoffmann and emulated him in many ways, combining both a traditional and a critical-historical outlook.

Hanokh Albeck (1890–1972)

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries the study of Rabbinic texts found its way into secular universities, where professors of Talmud produced important, critical editions of Jewish classics and investigated such works from historical viewpoints. Hanokh Albeck studied almost all areas of Tannaitic literature and the Talmud. Author of many scholarly books and essays in German and in Hebrew, he believed that the objective of the redactors of the Talmud had been to compile scattered materials, not to edit or abridge them. He also suggested that differences in halakhic midrashim were the result of different redactions and that the Tosefta and halakhic midrashim were unknown to the compilers of the Babylonian and Jerusalem Talmuds. His annotated editions based on manuscripts include Meiri's *Beit Ha-Behira* on Yebamot, Gen. Rabbah, Gen. Rabbati, and the Mishnah, with introduction, commentary, and notes. His studies on the Mishnah, Tosefta, Baraita, Midreshie Halakhah, and the Talmuds are: *Mavo la-Mishnah, Mavo la-Talmudim, Untersuchungen über die Redaktion der Mischna, Untersuchungen über die halkischen Midrashm*, and *Mehkarim bi-Veraita ve-Tosefta.* He also annotated works by earlier scholars. His views have many critics, but his editions of texts are universally accepted.

Moses Feinstein (1895–1986)

His responsa, *Igerot Moshe*, were collected and published in four volumes. His studies in Talmud were published under the title *Dibrot Moshe*, and some of his sermons on the Pentateuch were collected and published as *Darash Moshe.* His Talmudic novellae to Baba Qamma, Baba Mezia, and briefer notes to some other tractates have also been published.

Joseph Baer Soloveichik (1903–1992)

Named after his great grandfather, he was the spiritual mentor of the Orthodox Synagogue Rabbis in the 1950s and 1960s. His writings include theological essays such as "*Ish Ha-Halakhah*," "The Lonely Man of Faith," "*Kol Dodi Dofek*," "*Torah u-Melucha*," "*U-Vikashtem mi-Sham*," and several volumes of published addresses. His students have also edited many volumes of essays based on his lectures, such as a treatise on the topic of repentance and some of his Talmudic lectures.

His methods of analysis resembled, at the outset of a lecture, those of his grandfather, Rav Hayyim. Typically he began his lectures with a Talmudic passage and posed a mass of problems involved in the reading of the passage. He would then analyze

the passage utilizing the categories established by Rav Hayyim and showing them to be operative by recourse to the comments of Rishonim on the passage. He would then develop halakhic principles, based on his analysis, which he showed lay behind the passage at issue. When these principles were now read back into the passage, the mass of problems would dissolve into a structure very different from the initial reading he gave. He would, in turn, fit these operative principles into his own constructs of socio-religious categories. These constructs usually expressed a personal theology of the place of the individual and the community within the abstract universe of the halakhah. For the Rav, the halakhic universe expressed the Jew's relationship to the divine and the divine's relationship to the Jew.

The passing of towering talmudists such as Rabbis Kotler, Kamenetzky, and Auerbach marks the inception of an age of talmudic commentators and decisors not educated in the European mold. The next millennium thus begins with a sizable population of Jews growing more and more passionate about talmudic civilization even as the breaches left by the passing of the last generation have not been wholly filled.

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NOTE

[1] See EXEGESIS OF SCRIPTURE, MEDIEVAL RABBINIC.

Rashi

THE acronym for Rabbi Shlomo Yitzhaki, that is, Solomon son of Isaac. This acronym was also popularly interpreted to mean *Rabban shel Yisrael*, that is, "*the* teacher of Israel," *par excellence*.[1] That same appraisal of Rashi is reflected in the application to him of the eptithet *Parshandatha*, the name of one of the ten sons of the wicked Haman (Est. 9:6) but treated as a combination of the Hebrew noun *parshan*, "exegete," and the Aramaic noun *datha*, meaning "Torah" (see, e.g., Ezra 7:12). Thus *Parshandatha* means "Interpreter of the Torah *par excellence*."

Rashi was born in either 1030 or 1040 C.E. in Troyes, the capital of the province of Champagne in Northern France, and he died there in 1105 C.E.[2] Of his father Isaac we know for certain only that Rashi cites and recommends his interpretation of an obscure passage in B. A.Z. 75a. Rashi's mother was the sister of Simeon b. Isaac the Elder of Mainz (b. 950 C.E.), an author of synagogue poetry. Rashi quotes this uncle in his commentary on B. Shab. 85b. It is unknown whether Rashi received his earliest education at home or in a school sponsored by the Jewish community of Troyes.

It is widely agreed that by the age of thirty Rashi had completed his monumental commentary on the Pentateuch.[3] At this point he left Troyes to study at the established Jewish academies of Mainz and Worms. At Mainz, Rashi studied at the yeshivah, which had been presided over by Rabbenu Gershom b. Judah (960–1028), "the Light of the Exile," of whom Rashi said, "All Ashkenazic Jewry are the disciples of his disciples."[4] Rashi's teachers at Mainz were Rabbenu Gershom's direct disciples, Jacob son of Yakar, whom Rashi called "my old teacher" and "my teacher in Scripture,"[5] and Isaac son of Judah, whom Rashi called "virtuous teacher."[6] In the course of time Rashi would surpass Isaac son of Judah in his expertise in halakhah, and the latter would address some thirty-eight questions on Jewish law to Rashi.[7] After the death of Jacob son of Yakar, Rashi continued his studies at the Worms yeshivah headed by Isaac b. Eliezer, whom Rashi calls "our holy teacher."[8]

In about 1070, Rashi returned from Worms to Troyes, where he is said to have founded

a yeshivah.[9] This institution was located within a Jewish community numbering not more than two hundred souls, surrounded by a Christian population of not more than ten thousand.[10] Baron surmised that under these circumstances both Rashi's academy and his exegetical work were essentially leisure activities, while his principal occupations were the cultivation of grapes and the preparation of wine.[11] In fact, evidence from Rashi's responsa indicates that he had the title Gaon and that his academy bore the pretentious name *Yeshivat Geon Ya'aqov*.[12] Both of these designations suggest that Rashi was one of a number of persons throughout Europe and the Middle East who saw themselves and were seen by others as the legitimate successors of Hai Gaon (d. 1038). Hai Gaon's academy, "the Yeshivah of Pumbeditha" located at Baghdad, was alleged to have been founded by Judah b. Ezekiel (d. 299) in the third century C.E. Until the death of Hai Gaon in 1038, this academy and its rival, in Sura, alleged to have been founded by the Amora Rav in 219 C.E., had a status in Jewish intellectual life comparable to that of Oxford, Cambridge, and Harvard in modern academic life. Likewise, in the Jewish religion, the authority of those academies and their heads was analogous to that of the papacy in Roman Catholic Christianity. When Moses Maimonides (1135–1204) refers in the introduction to his *Mishneh Torah* to Geonim in Spain and France, he alludes to persons like Rashi, who had succeeded, like the Babylonian Geonim before them, in building institutions of learning, composing exegetical works, supplying authoritative answers to questions in halakhah, and raising up disciples. By so doing, these persons achieved a degree of recognition among world Jewry rivaling that of Hai Gaon in his time as both masters of and contributors to the essential literary canon of world Jewry. So well did Rashi succeed that within a few hundred years his commentaries on both Scripture and the Babylonian Talmud would be found in Jewish homes and schools throughout the world, while the name of Hai Gaon would be remembered only by specialists.

Evidence from a number of Rashi's responsa indicates that his students lived in his home and ate at his table. Some historians even hold that the yeshivah itself may have doubled as Rashi's living room This latter view may reflect a failure of older historians to recognize that Jewish civilization in both antiquity and in the Middle Ages was not confined to home and synagogue.[13]

The first disciples of Rashi included Simhah of Vitry, Shemayah, Judah b. Abraham, Judah b. Nathan, and Meir b. Samuel. Simhah of Vitry produced the important and fascinating annotated prayer book called *Mahzor Vitry*. Shemayah was for many years Rashi's personal secretary. He helped Rashi edit the final versions of his commentaries on Isaiah and Ezekiel, and Rashi consulted him when he edited the final version of his commentary on Psalms. In addition, Shemayah produced the earliest supercommentary on Rashi's Pentateuch commentary. This supercommentary survives in a single copy contained in Leipzig Stadtbibliothek, Ms. Wagenseil, B.H. fol. 1, which was produced by a scribe named Makhir b. Creshbia.[14] Simhah's son Samuel married Rashi's granddaughter, who was the sister of Rashbam (on whom see below). Judah b. Nathan (known as Riban) wrote commentaries on most of the Babylonian Talmud, including the commentary on Tractate Nazir found in the inner margins of current editions of the Talmud. Judah b. Nathan married Rashi's daughter Miriam. Their son was Rabbi Yom Tov of Falaise, while their daughter was the famous Elvina, one of the few women in the Middle Ages whose halakhic opinion has been recorded for posterity.[15] Meir b. Samuel is regarded as one of the first authorities to compose the commentaries now printed in the outer margins of Talmud, known as Tosafot.[16] He married Rashi's daughter Jochebed. Their children were Isaac, Solomon, Rabbenu Tam,[17] and Samuel b. Meir. The latter Samuel wrote a monumental commentary on the Pentateuch, the definitive commentary on the tenth chapter of B. Pesahim, and the standard commentary on the greater part of B. Baba Batra.[18]

Rashi's Literary Output—Liturgical Poetry

Best known today for his influential commentary on the Pentateuch and his indispensable commentary on most of the Babylonian Talmud, Rashi was also a poet. At least ten liturgical poems, all of which belong to the genre of *selihot*,[19] are attributed to him. In 1865, Leopold Zunz established the accepted list of seven of these that are now commonly regarded as actually from Rashi's pen.[20] Five of these are alphabetical acrostics beginning with the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet, *aleph*, and ending with the final letter, *taw*. Two are acrostics that begin with *taw* and end with *aleph*. The closing lines of all seven contain colophons identifying Rashi as the author. In five of these, Rashi refers to himself as "the young," while in the longest of these colophons he writes, "Solomon son of Rabbi Isaac, the young; may he grow in [mastery of] Torah and in good deeds." These colophons suggest that Rashi composed at least five of the seven poems at the dawn of his literary creativity.

One of Rashi's *selihot*, whose first line is "God of Hosts," is commonly recited on the morning before the New Year in the Ashkenazic rite shared by many Orthodox and Conservative congregations throughout the world. The poem reads:

God of Hosts, worshipped by the supernal beings,
You said, "Return rebellious children.
"Come to Me with thanksgiving and songs (cf., Ps. 100:3, 4),
"Seek My face (cf., Ps. 27:8) with crying and supplication" (Jer. 3:21).
Even when the prayer of persons praying is silenced (cf., Lam. 3:8)
The doors are wide open for the repentant.
Your promise is forever (cf., Ps. 119:89).
The paths to You kindly provided are everlasting and unchanging (cf., Mal. 3:6).
Look! We approach You like poor (Jer. 3:22) and impoverished
knocking on the door for charity (and) moaning like doves.
The charity is yours (Dan. 9:7), and the iniquities are ours.
We return to you in shame [knocking] on your doors (and) moaning like doves (Is. 38:14).
Remember us and recall us for a full life.
Cleanse our stains pure and white (cf., Is. 1:18).
May the sins of our youth (Ps. 25:7) be wiped away like [passing] clouds.
Renew our days like the former days (cf., Lam. 5:21).
Remove uncleanness (Zech. 13:2), and put an end to malicious deeds (cf., Dan. 9:24).
Pour pure (and) faithful water (Ezek. 36:25; Is. 33:16; Jer. 2:13; cf., Job. 6:15).
We acknowledge (Jer. 14:20) our wickedness: (we are) thorns and thistles (Ezek. 2:6).
Our stiff-neckedness is as [great as] the stoutness of oak trees.
We planted a vineyard spoiled by weeds (cf., Jer. 2:21).
Its face was covered with brambles and thorns (cf., Prov. 24:31).
Experienced in doing evil, glued to idols,
Avid for bribes, greedy for graft (cf., Is. 1:23),
Quickly we polluted the marriage chamber.[21]
From then on we have been (Is. 59:14; Jer. 7:24) steadily losing ground.
The sacrifices of doubly fat lambs ceased.
[Likewise] the fragrance of the incense,
Captain of fifty, advisor and official (Is. 3:3)
Assistant priest and high priest, Levites and Aaronides.
Look how we stand before you poor and impoverished.
Anxious in spirit (Is. 63:10), bitter like wormwood (Prov. 5:4),
We recall you in [our] trouble.
Worried and mournful because of the fear of your decree.
Make spring up for the faithful a branch of kindness (Jer. 33:15).
Command the expiation of former iniquities (Job. 7:21; Ps. 79:8).
May the voice of the one who sings aloud[22] put an end to litigation.
Silence the prosecuting attorney, and hush the defamers.
May our humble spirit and our broken and contrite hearts
be accepted as a substitute for the fat of sacrifices.
Fulfill for the descendants the oath [you swore] to the patriarchs.
Hear from your [heavenly] abode the prayers of those who sing aloud[23] to you.
Prepare their hearts so that they will be prepared to revere you.
Make your ear hearken to their plea for mercy
Again extricate your people from the mire.
May your ancient love come toward us quickly.
May those who depend on your compassion be acquitted in their trial.
Praying for your kindness and relying on your mercy.

Exegetical Compositions, Commentary on the Babylonian Talmud

Observing that Rashi's commentary on B. M.Q. is missing from standard editions of the Talmud but survives in a single MS. published by Kupfer,[24] Grossman suggests that 1) Rashi did, in fact, comment on most and possibly all of the Bavli; 2) the commentaries on tractates Taanit, Nedarim, Nazir, Horayot, and the latter parts of the commentaries on Baba Batra and Makkot were lost; 3) the vivid imagination of later copyists, followed by the printers, supplied the plausible explanation, eventually treated as fact by modern scholars, that Rashi died in the middle of his writing the commentaries on Baba Batra and Makkot and that he simply did not live long enough to write commentaries on the others.[25] But Abraham Berliner has showed that Rashi composed a frequently quoted, complete commentary on Nedarim, which disappeared.[26] Berliner likewise pointed out that the numerous quotations from Rashi in Rashbam's commentary on Baba Batra and in works by other medieval authorities prove that Rashbam and others had access to a complete commentary by Rashi on that tractate.[27] In the same vein, Berliner noted that numerous quotations in the responsa of Yom Tov b. Abraham of Seville (Ritba; 1250–1330) prove that the latter had access to Rashi's complete commentary on Makkot.[28]

Berliner pointed out that because the technique of preparing animal skins for writing was not yet widely known in France and Germany when Rashi was growing up, books were extremely rare in those lands. Consequently, one of Rashi's esteemed teachers, Eliezer the Great of Mainz, testified that he had never studied B. Abodah Zarah. It has been suggested that Rashi left his native Troyes for Mainz primarily to gain access to reliable copies of the Babylonian Talmud. He himself testifies that he made use of the copy of that work that Rabbenu Gershom (c. 1000) had copied out from manuscripts brought to Europe from the Middle East. Rashi took pains, mostly on the basis of conjecture (like modern biblical scholars with the Hebrew Bible!), to correct the text of the Talmud. In fact, all subsequent editions bear the imprint of his numerous conjectural emendations.

The first dictionary of the Hebrew and Aramaic employed in Rabbinic literature was Nathan b. Jehiel of Rome's *Arukh*, completed in 1105, the year Rashi died. As demonstrated by Berliner, both R. Nathan and Rashi learned much of their talmudic lexicography from two common sources, (a) the Mainz Commentary on the Talmud, which in turn was based on the commentary of Rabbenu Gershom, and (b) the Worms Commentary on the Talmud. In addition to establishing a usable Talmudic text and virtually creating his own dictionary in his head or in writing (his equivalent of index cards has not survived) at the very same time that Nathan b. Jehiel created the *Arukh*, Rashi made use of the Mainz and Worms Commentaries and the written commentaries of his three mentors, Jacob son of Yakar, Isaac b. Judah, and Isaac b. Eliezer. Rashi also made extensive use of material he had committed to memory during his student days in Mainz and Worms or which he had otherwise received orally from teachers and contemporaries. Just as Rashi systematically studied the Bavli and created and made extensive use in his commentary of a Babylonian Jewish Aramaic and Rabbinic Hebrew lexicon, so did he create and utilize a dictionary of the Talmud's exegetical terminology. As in his biblical commentaries, so also in his talmudic commentary, Rashi made use of the Hebrew term *leshon*, literally "language," to designate, variously, "a synonym of," "an expression referring to," and "a cognate of." Similarly in both commentaries, Rashi takes for granted the ubiquity of biliteral roots in the Semitic languages.

As in his biblical commentaries, so also in his talmudic one, Rashi rarely identifies his sources. Nevertheless, it is known that the basis of his commentary on each talmudic tractate of is what he had learned from the particular mentor who had first guided him through that tractate.[29]

Rashi succeeded in writing his running commentary on a large part of the Babylonian Talmud in Rabbinic Hebrew liberally peppered with Aramaisms and some 1,100 glosses in French and other European

languages.[30] The principle task, which the commentary continues to fulfill almost perfectly to this very day, is to lead the student, whose native language is neither Rabbinic Hebrew nor Babylonian Jewish Aramaic, through the syntax of the Talmud, indicating where a question ends and where an answer begins, defining obscure expressions, and filling in phrases and entire sentences, including allusions to Scripture, which the highly elliptical language of Mishnah and Talmud leave to the imagination of the educated reader. As in his biblical commentaries, Rashi frequently quotes the text being commented upon and incorporates his commentary into that text. While his biblical commentaries have in only a few interesting cases influenced modern Jewish and Christian Bible translators to deviate from the traditions established by the Old Greek and Jerome, his talmudic commentary is the basis of virtually all subsequent interpretations of the Talmud.

M. Liber's biography of Rashi includes eleven pages of Talmud translation with Rashi's commentary incorporated into it, separated from the text by brackets. Liber thereby replicates in Modern French (or in Adele Szold's English translation) the experience of yeshivah students and Jewish seminarians over the last nine centuries who have read the Talmud using Rashi's commentary to fill in the ellipses. The following two excerpts from Szold's English version graphically illustrate how Rashi's works:

> However, it is taught in a Baraita: "It once happened that R. Nehorai accompanied a witness to give evidence concerning him at Usha" [at the time when the Sanhedrin had its seat in that city, and the new moon was proclaimed there]. R. Nehorai was accompanied by another witness, and if this witness is not mentioned, it is out of regard for R. Nehorai [for R. Nehorai is mentioned only that we may infer from his case that so prominent an authority inclined to leniency in the circumstances stated; but it is not fitting for us to appeal to the authority of his less important companion]. Rab Ashi replies: There was already another witness at Usha [who knew the one who was coming to give evidence], and R. Nehorai went to join him. . . . (B. R.H. 22a).[31]
>
> It has likewise been shown [that the motive of the Mishnah in declaring the stolen lulav unfit for use on the second day of the festival, is that it would be the fulfillment of a regulation through the commission of a transgression]. Rabbi Ammi says. . . . (B. Suk. 29b).[32]

These quotations demonstrate how Rashi composed a very sophisticated commentary that provides the information the Talmud assumes the reader has at her or his fingertips. It is no wonder, therefore, that it has been suggested that, without this commentary, the Talmud might have been forgotten.[33]

Biblical Commentaries—The Pentateuch

According to the *Shulhan Arukh*, Orah Hayyim, Chapter 285, a Jew may fulfill the obligation to read each Sabbath the weekly Torah portion twice and the officially sanctioned Aramaic translation (Targum Onkelos) once by substituting for the Aramaic version Rashi's commentary. This law accords to Rashi's commentary a status in the liturgical life of the Jew rivaled only by the Pentateuch and the prayer book. The Jews' special devotion to Rashi's biblical commentaries inspired medieval Christians such as Nicholas de Lyra (fourteenth century), leaders of the Reformation, especially Martin Luther, and modern Jewish and Christian exegetes to go out of their way to consider and reconsider Rashi's interpretations.[34]

Rashi's commentary explains the meaning within Rabbinic Judaism of the Pentateuch's corpora of civil and criminal law (such as Exod. 21–24, Lev. 17–25, and Deut. 12–26), the prescriptions for the building of the Tabernacle (Exod. 25–31, 35–40), the sacrificial service of the Tabernacle (Lev. 1–7), and the laws of purity and diet (Lev. 11–16). In commenting on these subjects Rashi quotes verbatim, paraphrases, and summarizes the relevant commentaries found in the Mekhilta deRabbi Ishmael, Sifra, Sifre, and the Babylonian Talmud. He intersperses his quotations from these sources with lexicographical notes based primarily upon the dictionaries of biblical Hebrew produced by Menahem b. Jacob Ibn Saruq and Dunash b. Labrat in the tenth century and observations concerning Hebrew phonology, syntax, and grammar. Modern biblical exegetes find Rashi's observations on these subjects, many of which may be

original, especially interesting.[35] The fascination derives from the fact that Rashi's many important insights were made without benefit of either the phenomenal developments in Semitic linguistics accomplished by Spanish Jews of the tenth century (such as Judah Hayyuj, Moses b. Samuel ha-Kohen Ibn Gikatilla, and Jonah Ibn Janah, whose Arabic writings were inaccessible to Rashi) or the rediscovery in modern times of ancient Semitic languages such as Akkadian and Ugaritic.

In his treatment of biblical narrative, Rashi summarizes numerous Rabbinic stories culled from Genesis Rabbah and the Babylonian Talmud (e.g., B. Sot. 11a–12b in elucidating Exod. 1–15; B. Hag. 12a–b in elucidating Gen. 1; B. Sot. 34–35 in elucidating Num. 13–14) as well as medieval sources, such as several versions of Midrash Tanhuma and a book composed by R. Moses the Interpreter of Narbonne (eleventh century). Frequently, Rashi notes that a particular Rabbinic story, which may be worthwhile for the ideas it conveys, assumes the deliberate misinterpretation of a biblical word or idiom. Typical is Rashi's comment at Gen. 12:5 where the Hebrew idiom *asah nephesh* meaning "acquired person(s)," i.e., "purchased slaves" could be taken to mean "made soul(s)." Rashi comments as follows:

> THE SOULS THEY MADE IN HARAN, whom they brought under the wings of the Divine Presence. Abraham would convert the men to Judaism and Sarah would convert the women to Judaism, and Scripture accorded them merit as though they MADE them.[36] The literal meaning of Scripture is "the menservants and maidservants whom they acquired." The very same usage [of the Hebrew verb *asah*, normally "make," in the rarer meaning "acquire"] is attested in "he acquired all this wealth" (Gen. 31:1); "Israel acquires wealth" (Num. 31:1). [In each of these cases the verb *asah*] is a synonym of "acquire" [*qoneh*], i.e., "collect."

When Rashi concludes this comment with the expression *wekones*, meaning, "collect," he alludes to the ambiguity of the verb *qanah*, which, being a close semantic equivalent of *asah* can, like *asah*, mean "make," as in Gen. 14:19 where, as Rashi explains in his commentary there, the locution *qoneh*, "maker" of heaven and earth, corresponds to *oseh* (from *asah*), "maker" of heaven and earth, in Ps. 134:3. In bringing to bear upon the Pentateuchal narrative gems culled from Rabbinic literature as well as philological notes, Rashi does not create a running narrative. In fact, his insightful comments on one word, phrase, or passage are often contradicted by his equally insightful comments on following words, phrases, or passages. Typical of this phenomenon is Rashi's commentary on the creation narrative, Gen. 1:1–2:3. Here he alternates between his insistence, following Genesis Rabbah 1:19, that all of creation was called into being on the first day of the week of creation (so Rashi at Gen. 1:14, 24) and his quotation of other Rabbinic sources, according to which creation took place in stages exactly as related in Gen. 1:1–2:3 (so, e.g., Rashi at Gen. 1:11–12). In his commentaries on biblical narrative Rashi succeeded in striking the perfect balance between a summary of the great ideas found in Rabbinic aggadah and the basic data concerning biblical lexicography, grammar, and syntax that are necessary to decode the biblical text. A master pedagogue, Rashi rarely loses his readers' attention.

Commentaries on the Prophets and Hagiographa

In his commentary on the Pentateuch, Rashi summarizes the extensive legacy of ancient Rabbinic commentary on both the halakhah and aggadah, interspersed with important stylistic, grammatical, and lexicographical observations. The legacy of formative Judaism provided considerably less material on the books of the Prophets and Hagiographa. Most of these books, with the notable exceptions of Ezek. 40–48 and Est. 9, have no bearing on halakhah. Consequently, in his commentaries, Rashi concentrates on the stylistic, grammatical, and lexicographical issues without having to discuss the meaning of a given phrase or verse in halakhah. Likewise, the meager amount of Rabbinic aggadah quoted in Rashi's commentaries on the Former and Later Prophets probably reflects the absence of any Rabbinic corpora that treat the narratives of Joshua-Judges-Samuel-Kings in the way that Genesis Rabbah treats the narratives of Genesis. In fact, just as in commenting on the patriarchal

narratives in his commentary on Genesis Rashi draws extensively upon the narratives contained in Genesis Rabbah, so in his Psalms commentary he draws heavily upon the Midrash on Psalms.

Despite these facts, some modern scholars have concluded that Rashi's commentaries on the Prophets and Hagiographa are "rudimentary."[37] Others have concluded that the differences between the Pentateuch commentary and that on the Prophets and Hagiographa are primarily a function of Rashi's growing awareness of the difference between exegesis and eisegesis.[38] In fact, one of Rashi's last compositions, the commentary on Psalms, reveals his magnificent ability to combine midrash halakhah, midrash aggadah, source critical observations, lexicographical, syntactical, and grammatical insights and innovations. No less fascinating is his commentary on Ezekiel, which includes detailed maps of the future Jerusalem and the future reapportionment of the land of Israel among the twelve tribes.[39]

Typical of Rashi's source-critical observations is his comment at Ezek. 1:1. Ezekiel himself begins his book, speaking in the first person, "Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, in the fifth day of the month, as I was among the captives by the river of Chebar, that the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God." This verse is followed immediately with the following: "In the fifth day of the month, which was the fifth year of king Jehoiachin's captivity, the word of the Lord came expressly unto Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the river Chebar; and the hand of the Lord was there upon him" (Ezek. 1:2–3). Noting that while in v. 1 and vv. 4ff. Ezekiel speaks in the first person while in vv. 2–3 he is spoken about by someone else, Rashi remarks:

> The prophet spoke anonymously. He did not supply his name nor did he explain the system of chronology to which he referred [when he said, "in the thirtieth year"]. Therefore, the divine utterance [Heb. *ruah haqodesh*] interrupted his words in the two verses that follow [vv. 2–3] to identify the prophet and to explain his chronology, as it is stated, "on the fifth day of the month which was in the fifth year. . . ." These two verses are not the words of the prophet. The reasons why [these two verses] cannot be the words of the prophet are that he already said [in v. 1] that he was standing on the fifth day of the month; and that, at the beginning [of the Book], the prophet spoke in the first person, "as I was among the captives and I saw visions of God," and so also later on, "I looked, and behold a whirlwind" [vv. 4ff.] while two verses interrupt his words [in first person] as though someone else were speaking about him, "The word of the LORD came unto Ezekiel the priest . . . and the hand of the Lord was there upon him" (v. 3).[40]

In addition to writing complete commentaries on all biblical books with the exception of Ezra-Nehemiah[41] and Chronicles,[42] Rashi commented extensively on numerous biblical texts, which are quoted in the course of his monumental talmudic commentary.[43] One of the most interesting of these comments is his explanation, in Aramaic, of the dynamics of synonymous parallelism, one of the most obvious features of biblical poetry. Commenting on Ps. 33:13–14, "The Lord looks from heaven; he beholds all the sons of men. From the place of his habitation, he looks upon all the inhabitants of the earth," Rashi writes in his commentary to B.R.H. 18a: "and it [v. 14] repeats what is stated in the verse preceding it" [v. 13].

Commentary on Canticles

In his Bible commentaries Rashi frequently provides two alternative explanations of words, phrases and verses. One of the two he will label *peshuto* or *mashmao*, meaning "its literal meaning," while the other one he will label either "our rabbis interpreted" or *midrasho*, "the meaning it acquired in a Rabbinic source." Careful examination of Rashi's known sources,[44] as for example, at his commentary on Exod. 1–2, reveals that frequently both the interpretation designated as the literal meaning and the one which he seemingly marginalizes as Rabbinic are derived from the Rabbinic literature. In his commentary on Canticles, Rashi adds to literal meaning and "the meaning it acquired in a Rabbinic source" a third component, which he labels *dugmah*, "allegorical interpretation."[45] In this allegorical interpretation, the man in love who speaks, is spoken to, and spoken about is identified with God,

and the woman in love is identified with the Jewish people, referred to as the Congregation of Israel. Rashi indicates both in his long introduction to this commentary and throughout the commentary itself that his allegorical reading is to be preferred over all other allegorical interpretations of Canticles for two reasons. First, it makes possible a running narrative. Second, Rashi attempts to incorporate only Rabbinic texts, whose interpretations of biblical texts accord with biblical syntax, grammar, and lexicography.

Consequently, the commentary on Canticles successfully conveys the message that the Jewish allegorical interpretation by Rashi rests on the foundation of scientific biblical exegesis. The implication is, *inter alia*, that the Jewish allegorical interpretation in which the two persons in love are God and Israel is correct because the alternative, Christian allegory, in which the woman is the Church, lacks such a scientific basis. Consequently, as demonstrated by Kamin and Saltman, an anonymous thirteenth century Christian scholar produced a new Christian allegorical exposition of Canticles based upon Rashi's understanding of the vocabulary, grammar, and syntax of the book. The design was to establish the Christian understanding of the personae upon the firm foundation of scientific philology.[46]

Commentaries on Liturgical Poetry

Rashi held that the inclusion of medieval poetry (*piyyutim*) in the liturgy was a legally sanctioned practice known to Jewish communities all over the world and not to be questioned. While Abraham Ibn Ezra (1089–1164) in his commentary on Ecc. 5:1 argued that people should not include in their prayers liturgical poems that they did not understand, Rashi held that people are obligated to learn and to teach the meaning of the liturgical poems.[47] Consequently, he himself interpreted this poetry. Grossman notes that the surviving fragments of his commentaries on liturgical poetry interpret poems by Eleazar ha-Qallir, Solomon ha-Bavli, Meshullam b. Kalonymos, and Elijah the Elder of Le Mans.[48] Moreover, Grossman points out, Rashi's "manner of expounding the *piyyut* was much akin to his manner of expounding the Bible."[49] In addition, as in his commentary on the Babylonian Talmud, Rashi, like many nineteenth and twentieth century biblical scholars, assumed that when the received text made no sense, it should be restored by conjectural emendation.[50] As in his biblical commentaries, he gave prime consideration to lexicography, grammar, and syntax, and the eisegetical interpretations of the *piyyutim*.[51] From among the six examples of his commentaries on liturgical poetry that have survived in the writings of his disciples,[52] his commentary on line 22 of *Tohelet Yisrael*, "The Hope of Israel," by Solomon the Babylonian the Younger[53] is here chosen to illustrate his approach. The poetic line reads as follows:

> Our guilt has accumulated to an eighth and a twentieth. You, O Lord will not put an end to your mercy.

Rashi's comment including the lemma reads as follows:

> TO AN EIGHTH AND A TWENTIETH. These two obscure terms are small measures [of quantity] as we say in [B.] Sotah [8b]. [The line, therefore means] OUR GUILT HAS ACCUMULATED TO [such an extant] that it reaches all the measures that are counted with respect to transgressions, from the largest measure to the smallest measure. . . . All the measures that they [the Tannaim in the *baraita* quoted in B. Sot. 8b] mentioned with respect to transgressions can be counted in our hands, and with respect to all of them YOU WILL NOT PUT AN END TO YOUR MERCY. [This comment is] from the mouth of *rabbi* [i.e., my mentor, Rashi].[54]

Responsa

Rashi wrote approximately 350 responsa,[55] definitive answers to or legal decisions concerning questions of law. Most of his responsa deal with the rather typical questions addressed to rabbis in every generation: whether one may slaughter with a knife that is defective in an area not used in the slaughter,[56] what should be done with the head and legs of a lamb cooked in the same pot in the case in which the head, but not the legs, had been salted to remove the blood,[57]

and whether a man may appoint a gentile as his agent to deliver a bill of divorce to his wife.[58]

Others of Rashi's responsa deal with biblical exegesis, and these fall into four groups: a) #21 in Elfenbein's edition, which deals with Is. 45:1; b) the responsa addressed to Samuel of Auxerre concerning various passages in Jeremiah and Ezekiel;[59] c) the responsa concerning the Book of Psalms, which were recently edited and published by Jordan Penkower;[60] and d) the long responsum addressed to Nathan b. Makhir concerning the variety of meanings of the ubiquitous particle *ky* in Biblical Hebrew.[61] The latter responsum, is, in fact, a programmatic essay on the problem of homonymy in both Biblical Hebrew and Targumic Aramaic. Rashi demonstrates that the primary means for determining the meaning of any word in any text is its usage in context.

Typical of Rashi's responsa addressed to Samuel of Auxerre is the following, #1 in all editions:

> [He replied]: "Money shall be purchased" (Jer. 32:43). [In this clause the verb *weniqnah*] is future tense. [The clause means], "A FIELD shall again be purchased IN THIS LAND." [The verbal form] *niqnah*, "it was purchased," is the same grammatical form as are *nibnah* "it was built," *na'asah*, "it was done," *niglah*, "it was revealed." When [this verbal form] has no [prefixed] *waw*, it is past tense. Examples of this latter grammatical form [include]: "It was built [*nibnah*] of whole stone brought [from the quarry]" (1 Kgs. 6:7), ". . . a vision [*hazon*] was revealed [*niglah*] to Daniel" (Dan. 10:1). Now the *waw* turns it [the perfect form of the verb] into future tense. Examples of this latter grammatical form [include]: "The Glory of the Lord shall be revealed [*weniglah*]" (Is. 40:5), [wherein the verb *weniglah* means] "and it shall be revealed." Likewise *weniqnah* [in Jer. 32:43 means] "and it shall be purchased."

This responsum shows that, in Rashi's time as now, a proficient practicing rabbi, such as Samuel of Auxerre, might be ignorant of one of the most ubiquitous features of biblical Hebrew, the *waw* conversive. What the latter term means is that forms that would be construed as past in post-Biblical Hebrew are often in fact future in Biblical Hebrew and vice versa; and the main key to the identification of such forms is a prefixed *waw*. Rashi exemplifies the patience that ought to characterize the best of modern academicians. The latter are often surprised to find themselves explaining to advanced students or colleagues data one should have learned in elementary school. Ironically, the very questioner, Samuel of Auxerre, was able to show Rashi that he had contradicted himself on another matter in his commentary on Ezekiel. Consequently, Rashi, the patient respondent to Samuel's elementary questions, was prompted to correct his originally errant explanation of an obscure point.[62]

No less brilliant is Rashi's responsum concerning a grammatical problem in the liturgy of the Ten Days of Repentance.[63] The question is why during the High Holy Days one concludes the eleventh blessing of the weekday Amidah with the strange, seemingly ungrammatical formula *hammelek hammishpat* when elementary Hebrew grammar would seem to require *melek hammishpat*, "the just King." Rashi remarks that the accepted formula, in which the definite article precedes both of the two elements in the construct genitive chain, is probably a mistake and that the correct and original form indeed was probably *melek hammishpat*. He suggests that the accepted but ungrammatical formula was probably based on the analogy of the conclusion of the third blessing of the Amidah during the Ten Days of Repentance, *hammelek haqqadosh*, "the Holy King." There, however the syntax is different, since the two elements are not a construct genitive chain but a noun and adjective. However, Rashi, argues, in order not to change established practice, we should rely on exceptional cases in biblical Hebrew in which, as in this problematic benediction, the prefixed definite article appears before both elements of a construct chain. Such cases include *haʿemeq happegarim* at Jer. 31:40, *hammizbeah hannehoshet* at 2 Kgs. 16:14, and *hasseper hammiqnah* at Jer. 32:12.

Rashi as Storyteller

Experts in the history of Hebrew literature cite as many as eighteen narratives found in the commentary printed in the inner margins of the Talmud for which that commentary is the oldest known source.[64] In

fact, most of these stories belong to Talmud commentaries that are commonly known not to be from the pen of Rashi. It is proper, therefore, to speak of a maximum of four stories for which our oldest source is Rashi's commentary on the Babylonian Talmud. Three of these stories in their respective contexts are as follows:

1. B. Qid. 80b discusses whether or not grief sufficiently suppresses what moderns would call the libido (Heb.: *yetser*) so that a mixed group of men and women may carry a dead infant to the cemetery without being led to engage in illicit sex on the way. By association the Talmud points out a *maʿaseh*, "legal precedent/story:" Ten [men] carried her [i.e., an unnamed woman] in a bier.

Rashi comments as follows:

> TEN MEN TOOK HER [a certain woman] OUT IN A BIER relying on the assumption [of the bystanders] that she was dead. They had sex with her, and she was [in fact] a married woman.

2. In B. San. 19a we read: Rammi bar Abba reported that R. Yose [b. Halafta] legislated in Sepphoris that a woman should not go around in the marketplace with her child following her because of a *maʿaseh*, "legal precedent."

Rashi comments as follows:

> WITH HER CHILD FOLLOWING HER. Her little son should not walk behind her but in front of her. BECAUSE OF A LEGAL PRECEDENT: Licentious men kidnapped him [her child] from behind her back, and they put him in a house. When she returned home and did not see him, she began to cry out and weep. One of them [the licentious kidnappers] came and said, "Come, and I will show him to you." She entered his house after him, and they had sex with her.

3. The Story of Beruria: It is reported in B. A.Z. 18b that Meir (fl. c. 135–175 C.E.) suddenly fled from Palestine to Babylonia. It is further reported that it is a matter of controversy why he did so: There are some who say that it was because of the *maʿaseh*, "what happened with" Beruria.

Rashi comments:

> AND THERE ARE SOME WHO SAY THAT IT WAS BECAUSE OF WHAT HAPPENED WITH BERURIA. Once she made fun of the sages' dictum (B. Qid. 80a), "Women are light headed." He [Meir, her husband] said to her, "I swear by your life that ultimately you will agree with their words." He commanded one of his disciples to test her with respect to fornication. [The disciple] pressured her for many days until she agreed. When she came to her senses she strangled herself. Rabbi Meir ran away because of [his] shame [at what he had perpetrated].

Not surprisingly, in three of the four instances Rashi understands the term *maʿaseh* in the very limited sense it has in the Mishnah, namely, "legal precedent" rather than in the wider sense that it acquired in Yiddish, where *maʿaseh* came to mean "story." Consequently, except for the famous Beruria legend, there is hardly anything in Rashi's attempts to answer the exegetical question, "What precisely was the legal precedent?" that would qualify as a contribution to the history of Hebrew *belles lettres*. In fact, aside from the appearance in the Beruria legend of a named hero and heroine of Rabbinic literature, Meir and his wife Beruria, the Beruria legend would also hardly qualify as a narrative rather than as simply an anecdote. Interestingly, Jacob Neusner demonstrated in his *Rabbinic Narrative: A Documentary Perspective*. Volume One. *Forms, Types, and Distribution of Narratives in the Mishnah, Tractate Abot, and the Tosefta* (Leiden, 2003) that in the Mishnah *maʿaseh* simply means "legal precedent" while in Tosefta it can have the wider meaning of "story."

The last of the four narratives, for which Rashi's commentary on the Babylonian Talmud seems to be the oldest source, is his version of the Fable of the Fox and the Wolf. It is noted in B. San. 38b that Yohanan b. Napha (d. 279 C.E.) reported that Meir had in his repertoire three hundred fox fables, of which only three are extant. Yohanan, in turn, tells us only that one fox fable (or perhaps all three) was associated with the following three biblical verses: "Parents ate sour grapes, and children's teeth are in pain" (Ezek. 18:18); "Scales are honest, and weights are honest" (Lev. 19:35); "A virtuous one is rescued from trouble, and a wicked one is below him" (Prov. 11:8). Apparently, Yohanan and the anonymous editor of the Talmud relied on the Jewish people's collective memory to preserve all three of Meir's fables associated with the three biblical verses. Unfortunately,

none of these tales has so far been recovered from ancient manuscripts. Consequently, Rashi, in his commentary at B. San. 38b, supplies the following fable in which Meir, as it were, composes a story utilizing the previously quoted verses from the Prophets, Torah, and Hagiographa respectively:

> "PARENTS ATE SOUR GRAPES" (Ezek. 18:18). The fable is as follows: The fox deceitfully persuaded the wolf to enter the Jewish quarter [of the town] on the eve of the Sabbath and to prepare with them what is required for [the three festive Sabbath] meal[s] and to eat with them on the Sabbath. However, when he was about to enter [the Jewish quarter] they [the Jews] beat him with clubs. He [the wolf] went [with intent] to kill the fox. He [the fox] explained to him: "They only beat you because of your father, who once went to help them [the Jews] to prepare a meal and he ate every good dish." He [the wolf] asked him, "Am I being beaten up because of my father?" He [the fox] replied, "Yes. 'The parents ate sour grapes . . .' (Ezek. 18:18), but come with me and I will show you a place to eat to satiety." He came to a well at whose edge was located a tree on which a rope was hung, and at each end of the rope was tied one of two pails. The fox entered the upper pail so that it became heavy and descended, while the [previously] lower pail ascended. The wolf asked him, "Why do you enter there?" He [the fox] replied, "Here there is meat and cheese to eat to satiety." He [the fox] showed him the reflection of the moon in the water. It was a round image that looked like round cheese. He [the wolf] asked him, "How can I descend?" He [the fox] said to him, "Get into the upper pail." He [the wolf] entered so that it became heavy and descended while the pail in which the fox was located ascended. He [the wolf] said to him, "How can I ascend?" He [the fox] said to him, "A virtuous one is rescued from trouble, and a wicked one is under him" (Prov. 11:8). Is it not thus written [in the Torah], "Scales are honest and weights are honest" (Lev. 19:35)?

The lesson taught here by Rashi, if not by R. Meir, is that, contrary to appearances, justice ultimately does prevail.[65]

Rashi in Poetry

As early as the fifteenth century, Rashi was known in Spain as *Parshandatha*, Torah commentator *par excellence*. This idea was expressed in two famous poems from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. For example, Hayyim Joseph David Azulai (c. 1724–1807) in his monumental work on medieval Jewish sages, *The Names of the Great Ones*, quotes the fifteenth century Moses Ibn Danon to the effect that those who came after Rashi said:

> All the French commentaries throw into the trash [Heb.: *'ashpatha*]
> Except for Parshan Datha and Ben Poratha

In addition, Oxford Bodleian Library Ms. Pococke 74[2], whose *terminus ab quo* is 1586 C.E., records the following frequently quoted poem, which the manuscript itself wrongly attributed to Abraham Ibn Ezra (1089–1164):

> A star arose from France; he pitched his camp at Jotbathah.
> Blessed be the arrival of him and his host. He has come from Sinai or from Zin.
> From Ithiel and Jekuthiel he came like Samuel from Ramah.
> Through him there is light for every blind person. Through him every thirsty person drank honey from his sweet water.
> He provided for the Torah an awesome commentary. Therefore, they named him *Parshan Datha.*
> His book provides answers to all who ask, and in all Israel it is the accepted solution.
> The endeared solves. He breaks through the wall.
> The Lord's secret he saw.Divine wisdom was spread out for him.
> Also kingship was for him appropriate.
> An angel of the creator abides with him,
> [and he says to that angel, which is personified wisdom]:
> "Be strong in Mishnah."

Rashi in Legend

Rashi, whose contributions to Torah-literature were known and read by literate Jews throughout the world, was the subject of numerous legends. For example, it is said that his father was an extremely poor man who sought a way other than philanthropy to honor the Torah. Therefore, Rashi's father would sweep the floor in front of the Holy Ark in the synagogue with his beard. The prophet Elijah informed him that in consideration of his thus honoring the Torah, he would father a son who would enlighten the entire world with his knowledge. The prophet asked one favor, namely, that he

be privileged to hold that son in his lap at his circumcision. As one might expect, Elijah arrived late, and the impatient guests pressured Rashi's father, Isaac, to go ahead with the ceremony without waiting for the honored guest. Isaac, however, insisted on waiting just a bit longer. Elijah arrived and thus demonstrated the virtue of Isaac *vis-a-vis* the impatient guests.[66]

Probably the most famous legend about Rashi pertains to his alleged encounter with Godfrey of Bouillon. According to this story, when Godfrey was about to wrest the land of Israel from the Muslims in the course of the First Crusade, he wished to ask Rashi if he would succeed. At first Rashi refused to meet him, and when Godfrey went to Rashi's academy, Rashi made himself invisible. Rashi eventually informed Godfrey that he would indeed conquer the land of Israel but that he would only hold it for three days, after which it would be reconquered by the Muslims. Moreover, Rashi foresaw that Godfrey would return home with only two surviving soldiers from his vast army. Godfrey responded that if the prophecy should not be fulfilled to the last detail, he would throw Rashi to the dogs and put to death all the Jews of France. Ultimately, Godfrey returned to France with three soldiers rather than two and was prepared to punish Rashi for prophesying falsely. However, just as he passed through the gates of the city, a heavy rock fell upon one of the three soldiers and killed him. Godfrey went to Rashi's academy to acknowledge the veracity of the prophesy but learned that Rashi was no longer alive.[67]

It has long been observed that this legend is rooted in a tendency to enhance Jewish cultural heroes by asserting that they interacted with and were recognized by heroes of the larger gentile world.[68] In fact, this same tendency is reflected in many modern studies of Rashi, which emphasize less the cogency of his exegesis than the fact that he was admired and quoted by Christian scholars.

Rashi's Drawings

When Abraham Berliner (1833–1915) was examining medieval manuscripts for the preparation of a critical edition of Rashi's commentary on the Pentateuch,[69] he called attention to maps and other diagrams that accompanied the commentaries. Because the common printed editions were based upon inferior manuscripts that did not include these pedagogical devices, it was almost forgotten that Rashi's commentaries, like many other medieval Hebrew exegetical works, originally included line drawings. In fact, the printed editions of Rashi's commentary on the Bavli includes more than a hundred drawings, while medieval manuscripts include many more; the common printed editions of Rashi's biblical commentary include an illustration at 1 Kgs. 6:31.[70] The illustrations found in medieval manuscripts include, *inter alia*, 1) a combination map and ladder to accompany Rashi's exegesis of Gen. 28:17;[71] 2) a picture of the lampstand or *menorah* described in Exod. 25;[72] 3) an illustration at Exod. 29:2 of the gesture to be performed while anointing with oil the unleavened wafers for the ceremony of consecration of the Aaronide priesthood;[73] 4) a crown indicating the hand motion to be performed at the anointing of a king of Israel (1 Kgs. 1:34);[74] 5) an illustration of the interpretation Rashi rejects concerning the shape of the entrance to the Inner Sanctum of Solomon's Temple (1 Kgs. 6:31);[75] 6) a map showing the location of Shiloh (Jdg. 21:19);[76] 7) an illustration of the circuitous route by which the Israelites went from Egypt into the Promised Land (Num. 34);[77] 8) a schematic map of the boundaries of Canaan described in Num. 34);[78] 9) a map of the future Jerusalem, illustrating Ezek. 45;[79] 10) a map of the future restoration of the all the twelve tribes of Israel to Cisjordan Palestine, illustrating Ezek. 48, with the assigning of equal portions to each tribe.[80]

Initially modern scholars encountered skepticism when they argued that these and other illustrations were an integral part of Rashi's exegesis. People often assume that what they have never seen before cannot be real. One of the classic arguments employed by scholars who sought to restore the drawings to modern editions of the commentaries was that Rashi himself testified to his use of illustrations in a responsum addressed to Samuel of Auxerre. There he

stated, "I will make a drawing and send it to you."[81] Jordan Penkower actually found a copy of that drawing in the medieval Ms. Evr. I C 6, p. 93b in the National Library at St. Petersburg, Russia, and he published it together with a modern rendition of it prepared by Menachem Cohen.[82]

Rashi explains in the block of text contained within the map of the boundaries of the land of Canaan (Num. 34; see fig. 128) that the purpose of the map described in Num. 34 and illustrated graphically by Rashi is to provide a legal definition of "the land of Israel" with respect to those regulations of the Torah that apply only therein (see M. Qid. 1:9; T. Ter. 2:12; T. Hal. 2:11). In fact, in supplying this map with precisely that justification, Rashi was responsible for the view within the realm of halakhah that the map of the land of Israel found in Num. 34 is operative with respect to the Mishnaic Law of Agriculture.

MAYER GRUBER

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NOTES

[1] See, *inter alia*, V. Aptowitzer, *Introductio ad Sefer Rabiah* (Jerusalem, 1938), p. 395; this interpretation of the acronym recognizes that during the past nine centuries Rashi's commentaries on the Bible and Babylonian Talmud have been the two most influential corpora of Jewish sacred texts after the Bible and the Talmud themselves. The apostate Raymond Martini (1220–1285) seems to have been the first to misinterpret the initials *Rshy* as Rabbi Salomo Yarhi, which is the name given Rashi in the Latin translations of most of his Bible commentary produced by Johann Friedrich Breithaupt (2 vols.; Gotha, 1710–1713) and which appears even in some Jewish sources; for various views concerning the meaning of the acronym, see Avraham Grossman, *The Early Sages of France* (Jerusalem, 1996), p. 122, n. 2.

[2] See Mayer I. Gruber, *Rashi's Commentary on Psalms* (Leiden, 2004); see also Grossman, op. cit., p. 122.

[3] On the relative dating of Rashi's various commentaries, see Benjamin J. Gelles, *Peshat and Derash in the Exegesis of Rashi* (Leiden, 1981), pp. 138–139.

[4] J. Mueller, ed., *Teshuvot Hakeme Sarephat weLutir* (Vienna, 1881), #21.

[5] Esra Shereshevsky, *Rashi: The Man and His World* (New York, 1982), p. 26.

[6] See Rashi's commentary to B. Yom. 16b; for additional sources, see Shereshevsky, p. 34, n. 63.

[7] For the list, see Israel Elfenbein, *Responsa Rashi* (New York, 1943), p. xxii.

[8] For the sources see I. Ta-Shma, "Isaac Ben Eliezer," in *Encyclopedia Judaica*, vol. 9, pp. 18–19.

[9] Herman Hailperin, *Rashi and the Christian Scholars* (Pittsburgh, 1963), p. 27.

[10] Salo Baron, "Rashi and the Community of Troyes," in H.L. Ginsberg, ed., *Rashi Anniversary Volume* (New York, 1941), p. 59; similarly, L. Rabinowitz, *The Social Life of the Jews of Northern France in the XII-XIV Centuries* (New York, 1972), pp. 30–32.

[11] Baron, "Rashi and the Community of Troyes," p. 60.

[12] See the responsum addressed to Azriel son of Nathan in Joël Müller, *Réponses faîtes de célèbres rabins français et lorrains du XI. et XII. siècle* (Vienna, 1881), p. 9b; and see also the responsum addressed to Joseph son of Judah in Müller, p. 4a.

[13] M. Breuer, "Toward the Investigation of the Typology of Western Yeshivot in the Middle Ages," in E. Etkes and Y. Salmon, eds., *Studies in the History of Jewish Society in the Middle Ages and in the Modern Period Presented to Professor Jacob Katz on his Seventy-Fifth Birthday* (Jerusalem, 1980), pp. 49–53 (Hebrew); contrast the evidence assembled by Norman Golb, *The Jews in Medieval Normandy* (Cambridge, 1967), pp. 192–198, 563–576, for the medieval yeshivah as an independent institution with its own architecturally distinct building. For antiquity, Dan Urman, "The House of Assembly and the House of Study: Are They One and the Same?" in *JJS* 44 (1993), pp. 236–257; Bruce Chilton, *The Glory of Israel: The Theology and Provenience of the Isaiah Targum* (Sheffield, 1982); idem, *The Isaiah Targum. Introduction, Apparatus, and Notes* (Collegeville and Edinburgh, 1987); Steven Fine, *Jewish Archaeology: Art and Judaism during the Greco-Roman Period* (Philadelphia, 2004).

[14] See Grossman, *The Early Sages of France*, pp. 358–365.

[15] For the reference, see Gruber, *Rashi's Commentary on Psalms* and the literature cited there.

[16] Grossman, *The Early Sages of France*, pp. 168–170, and the extensive literature cited there.

[17] See E.E. Urbach, *The Tosaphists* (Jerusalem, 1980), pp. 41–45 (Hebrew).

[18] Concerning R. Samuel b. Meir, commonly known as Rashbam, see especially Sara Japhet and Robert B. Salters, *The Commentary of R. Samuel ben Meir Rashbam on Qoheleth* (Jerusalem, 1985); Martin I. Lockshin, *Rashbam's Commentary on Exodus* (Atlanta, 1997).

[19] *Selihot* are liturgical poems that precede and follow the recitation on the Day of Atonement and various other fasts of the so-called thirteen attributes of God (Exod. 34:6–7), conceived as a reminder to God of his promise made at the time of the golden calf episode to forgive collective Israel for backsliding.

[20] Leopold Zunz, *Literaturgeschichte der synagogalen Poesie* (Berlin, 1865), pp. 252–254; for the complete text of the poems, see A.M. Haberman, *Piyute Rashi* (Jerusalem, 1940).

[21] Here Rashi alludes to the worship of the golden calf at the very foot of Mt. Sinai, conceived metaphorically as the site of the marriage of God and Israel. Israel's worship of the calf is therefore compared, as it were, to a bride's committing adultery during her honeymoon; see Rashi at Cant. 1:12 following Canticles Rabbah; cf., B. Shab. 88b; B. Git. 36b.

[22] The *hazzan* who intones the prayers on behalf of the congregation.

[23] The plural form here refers to all *hazzanim* in all synagogues.

[24] Efraim F. Kupfer, *R. Salomon Izhaqi (Rashi) Commentarius in Tractatum Mo'ed Katan ad Fidem Codicus Hispansiensis* (Jerusalem, 1961); for a summary of the extensive literature reflecting the ongoing debate on whether or not the latter publication is, in fact, Rashi's commentary on B. M.Q., see Gruber, *Rashi's Commentary on Psalms*.

[25] Grossman, *The Early Sages of France*, pp. 217–218.

[26] Abraham Berliner, "Beiträge zur Geschichte der Raschi Kommentare," in *Jahresbericht des Rabbiner-Seminars zu Berlin für 1901/1902*, p. 15.

[27] Ibid.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Ibid., pp. 7–8.

[30] Moche Catane, *Recueil Des Gloses* (Jerusalem, 1988), p. 252.

[31] Maurice Liber, *Rashi* (Philadelphia, 1938), pp. 144–145.

[32] Ibid., p. 147.

[33] Menahem b. Zerah (c. 1312–1385) in his *Zedah la-Derek*, quoted by Liber, p. 158.

[34] See Hailperin, *Rashi and the Christian Scholars*; for the modern period, see Harry M. Orlinsky, *Notes on the New Torah Translation* (Philadelphia, 1969), p. 40.

[35] See, e.g., Chaim (Harold) Cohen, "Elements of 'Peshat' in Traditional Jewish Bible Exegesis," in *Immanuel* 21 (1987), pp. 30–42; idem, "Jewish Medieval Commentary on the Book of Genesis and Modern Biblical Philology: Gen 1–18," in *JQR*, n.s., 81 (1990), pp. 1–11.

[36] This part of the comment is based upon Genesis Rabbah 39:14.

[37] Hayyim Soloveitchik, "Rashi," in *Dictionary of the Middle Ages* (New York, 1988), vol. 10, p. 259.

[38] Gelles, p. 139.

[39] See below.

[40] Biblical quotations are based upon KJV; the text of Rashi's commentary is the one established by Jordan Penkower and published in Menachem Cohen, *Mikra'ot Gedolot 'HaKeter': Ezekiel* (Ramat-Gan, 2000), p. 2; other examples of Rashi's source-critical comments are found at Josh. 1:1; Jdg. 5:31; Is. 8:19; Ps. 37:25; 45:2. Modern source criticism sought by reference to contradictions either 1) to debunk the authority of Scripture by arguing, for example, that Moses alone could not have written the Pentateuch (Spinoza); or 2) to distinguish between authoritative prophetic voices and spurious additions (see *passim* in the various critical commentaries on Jeremiah and Ezekiel). Rashi, and his Rabbinic forbears sought instead, by pointing to two or more divinely commissioned voices within a given Scriptural text, to *eliminate* the possibility that a single authoritative voice would contradict itself.

[41] The commentary on Ezra-Nehemiah wrongly attributed to Rashi in standard editions of the Rabbinic Bible shares Rashi's exegetical terminology. However, unlike Rashi, whose telegraphic style replicates that of Rabbinic Midrash, the author of Pseudo-Rashi on Ezra-Nehemiah is one of the most verbose Hebrew exegetes of the Middle Ages. Demonstrating great familiarity with Rashi's discussion of many texts from Ezra-Nehemiah, this unnamed commentator tends to contradict Rashi as, for example, at Ezra 2:2; 4:12; 6:4; Neh. 3:2; 10:39; see the extensive discussions in Gruber, *Rashi's Commentary on Psalms*; Joel Florsheim, *Rashi on the Bible in His Commentary on the Talmud* (Jerusalem, 1981–1991), vol. 3, pp. 264–285.

[42] J.N. Epstein, "L'auteur du commentaire des chroniques," in *REJ* 58 (1909), pp. 189–199, went beyond Joseph Weisse (1841), Leopold Zunz (1845), and V. Aptowitzer (1908), showing that the author of the commentary on Chronicles could not be Rashi and assigning it rather to Samuel the Pious of Speyer. This twelfth century commentator employs exegetical terminology distinct from that of Rashi. The teachers he mentions were not Rashi's mentors but, frequently, lived two generations after Rashi, such as Isaac b. Samuel of Narbonne and Eliezer b. Meshullam of Narbonne. At 2 Chron. 3:15 and 22:11, he cites Rashi's comments at 1 Kgs. 7:15 and 2 Kgs. 2:11, referring to Rashi as "Rabbenu Solomon, may the memory of the righteous be for a blessing." At 2 Chron. 35:18, he cites and explicitly rejects an interpretation known to be Rashi's at 2 Kgs. 23:22. Epstein's arguments were anticipated already by the seventeenth-eighteenth century Chalifa b. Malka of Morocco; see Shlomo Elkayam, "The Liturgy of the Jews of Morocco according to Kaph Naqi by R. Halifa b. Malka," in *Peamim* 78 (1999), p. 66, n. 39 (Hebrew).

[43] Rashi's comments on biblical texts incorporated in the Talmud have been collected Florsheim; see above, n. 41.

[44] See modern annotated editions of Rashi's commentaries, such as Charles Chavel, *Rashi's Commentaries on the Torah* (Jerusalem, 1983) (Hebrew); Aryeh Bodenheimer, *Ha'Elef LiShlomo On*

Rashi's Commentary to Song of Songs (Beer Sheva, 2001) (Hebrew); Gruber, *Rashi's Commentary on Psalms*; I. Maarsen, *The Commentary of Rashi on the Prophets and Hagiographa*, vol. 1 [the Minor Prophets] (Amsterdam, 1930); vols. 2 and 3 [Isaiah and Psalms] (Jerusalem, 1935–1936) (Hebrew); Mordechai Leib Katzenelenbogen, *Joshua and Judges with the Commentary of Rashi* (Jerusalem, 1987) (Hebrew); see also Menahem Zohory, *Rashi's Sources* (17 vols.; Jerusalem, 1986–1994).

[45] See Sarah Kamin, "*Dugmah* in Rashi's Commentary on Song of Songs," in *Tarbiz* 52 (1983), pp. 41–58 (Hebrew).

[46] See Sarah Kamin and Avrom Saltman, *Secundum Salomonem* (Ramat-Gan, 1989).

[47] See E.E. Urbach, *Arugat Habosem* (Jerusalem, 1963) pt. iv, pp. 6–7 (Hebrew) and the literature cited there.

[48] See Avraham Grossman, "Exegesis of the Piyyut in Eleventh Century France," in Gilbert Dahan, Gérad Nahon, and Elie Nicolas, eds., *Rashi et la culture juive en France du Nord au moyen âge* (Paris, 1997), p. 263.

[49] Ibid., p. 264.

[50] Cf., Grossman, *The Early Sages of France*, p. 527.

[51] Grossman, "Exegesis of the Piyyut in Eleventh Century France," p. 264; idem, *The Early Sages of France*, p. 250.

[52] See Grossman, *The Early Sages of France*, pp. 249–250; 522–528.

[53] Solomon b. Judah was a tenth century Hebrew liturgical poet who appears to have lived in Northern Italy. It is surmised that he is called "the Babylonian" because his family was of Iraqi origin.

[54] Grossman, *The Early Sages of France*, p. 525.

[55] See Israel Elfenbein, *Responsa Rashi* (New York, 1943). Grossman, *The Early Sages of France*, pp. 239–243, cites additional unpublished manuscript responsa. On the other hand, Grossman, there, shows that various responsa treated as authentic by Elfenbein are spurious.

[56] Elfenbein, *Responsa Rashi*, #133.

[57] Ibid., #138.

[58] Ibid., #203.

[59] A new edition of these responsa, edited by Jordan Penkower, is found in Cohen, *Mikra'ot Gedolot 'HaKeter': Ezekiel*, p. 321.

[60] See ibid.

[61] For the Hebrew text see, *inter alia*, Elfenbein, *Responsa Rashi*, #251, pp. 293–297; for additional literature and an annotated English translation see Gruber, *Rashi's Commentary on Psalms*.

[62] See Jordan Penkower, "Rashi's Commentary on Ezekiel," in *Studies in Bible and Exegesis* (Ramat-Gan, 2004), vol. 7 (Hebrew).

[63] Elfenbein, *Responsa Rashi*, #18, pp. 12–13.

[64] For a complete survey of the scholarly literature and an important original contribution to this subfield of the discipline Hebrew Literature, see Luis Landa, "Rashi's Stories in the Rashi Commentary Printed in the Babylonian Talmud," in *Eshel Beer Sheva* 3 (1986), pp. 101–117 (Hebrew); see also Eli Yassif, *The Hebrew Folktale: History, Genre, Meaning* (Jerusalem, 1994), pp. 288–290.

[65] Concerning the assertion in Rabbinic literature that justice prevails on earth within historical time, see Jacob Neusner, *How the Rabbis Liberated Women* (Atlanta, 1998), pp. 80–83; concerning Rabbinic Judaism's recognition that, in fact, justice does not always prevail, see also idem, *The Halakhah and the Aggadah: Theological Perspectives* (Lanham, 2001), pp. 192–193; for the sources of the fable see Haim Schwarzbaum, *The Mishle Shu'alim (Fox Fables) of Rabbi Berechiah Ha-Nakdan* (Kiron, 1979), pp. 550–555.

[66] For literary analysis of the story, see Eli Yassif, *The Hebrew Folktale: History, Genre, Meaning* (Jerusalem, 1994), pp. 368–369; for the written sources, see p. 656, n. 83.

[67] See Yassif, p. 360; for the sources, see, p. 654, n. 77; cf. Liber, pp. 69–70.

[68] See Liber, pp. 68–69; for detailed literary analysis of the story, see Yassif, pp. 360–362.

[69] See A. Berliner, *Raschi (Salomonis Isaacidis) in Pentateuchum Commentarius* (Berlin, 1866) (Hebrew); idem, *Raschi: Der Kommentar des Salomo b. Isak über den Pentateuch* (Frankfurt-am-Main, 1905) (Hebrew).

[70] For the meaning of this illustration and its origins, see below and Mayer I. Gruber, "Notes on the Diagrams in Rashi's Commentary to the Book of Kings," in *Studies in Bibliography and Booklore* 19 (1994), pp. 29–34.

[71] See Menachem Cohen, *Mikra'ot Gedolot 'HaKeter': Genesis, Pt. II* (Ramat-Gan, 1999), p. 230.

[72] See Mayer I. Gruber, "What Happened to Rashi's Diagrams?" in *Bodleian Library Record* 14, no. 2 (1992), p. 120.

[73] See Mayer I. Gruber, "Light on Rashi's Diagrams from the Asher Library of Spertus College of Judaica," in Mayer I. Gruber, ed., *The Solomon Goldman Lectures VI* (Chicago, 1993), pp. 73–85.

[74] See Mayer I. Gruber, "Notes on the Diagrams in Rashi's Commentary to the Book of Kings," in *Studies in Bibliography and Booklore* 19 (1994), pp. 29–34.

[75] Ibid., pp. 34–36.

[76] See Gruber, "What Happened?" p. 119, fig. 6.

[77] Catherine Delano Smith and Mayer I. Gruber, "Rashi's Legacy: Maps of the Holy Land," in *The Map Collector*, no. 59 (summer, 1992), pp. 3–35.

[78] Ibid.

[79] See now Cohen, *Mikra'ot Gedolot 'HaKeter': Ezekiel*, p. 324

[80] See ibid., p. 325; and see the discussion in Mayer I. Gruber, "The Sources of Rashi's Cartography," in Norman Simms, ed., *Letters and Texts of Jewish History* (Hamilton, New Zealand, 1999), pp. 61–67.

[81] For the argument, see Delano Smith and Gruber, p. 7; for the text of the responsum, see Cohen, *Mikra'ot Gedolot 'HaKeter': Ezekiel*, p. 321, #9.

[82] See *Mikra'ot Gedolot 'HaKeter': Ezekiel*, pp. 322–323.

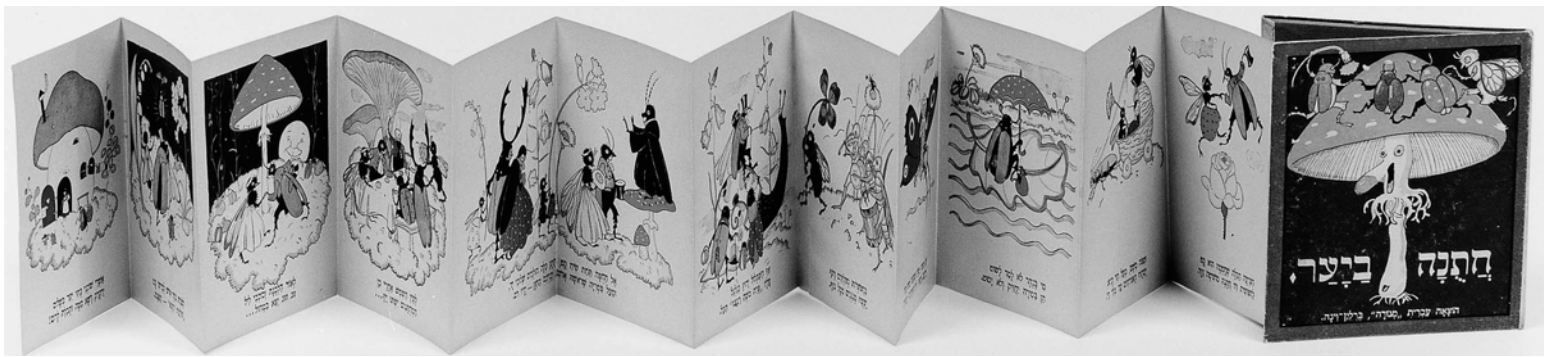

Figure 84. Wedding in the Forest (Chatunah Vaya'ar), by Ya'akov David Kamson, illustrated by Else Wentz-Vitar, Berlin, Germany, c. 1925. Secular books in Hebrew were a nineteenth century innovation. Previously, Hebrew was used only for prayer and the study of holy texts.

Figure 85. Three girls study Hebrew books at a synagogue in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, 1993. Photograph by Zion Ozeri.

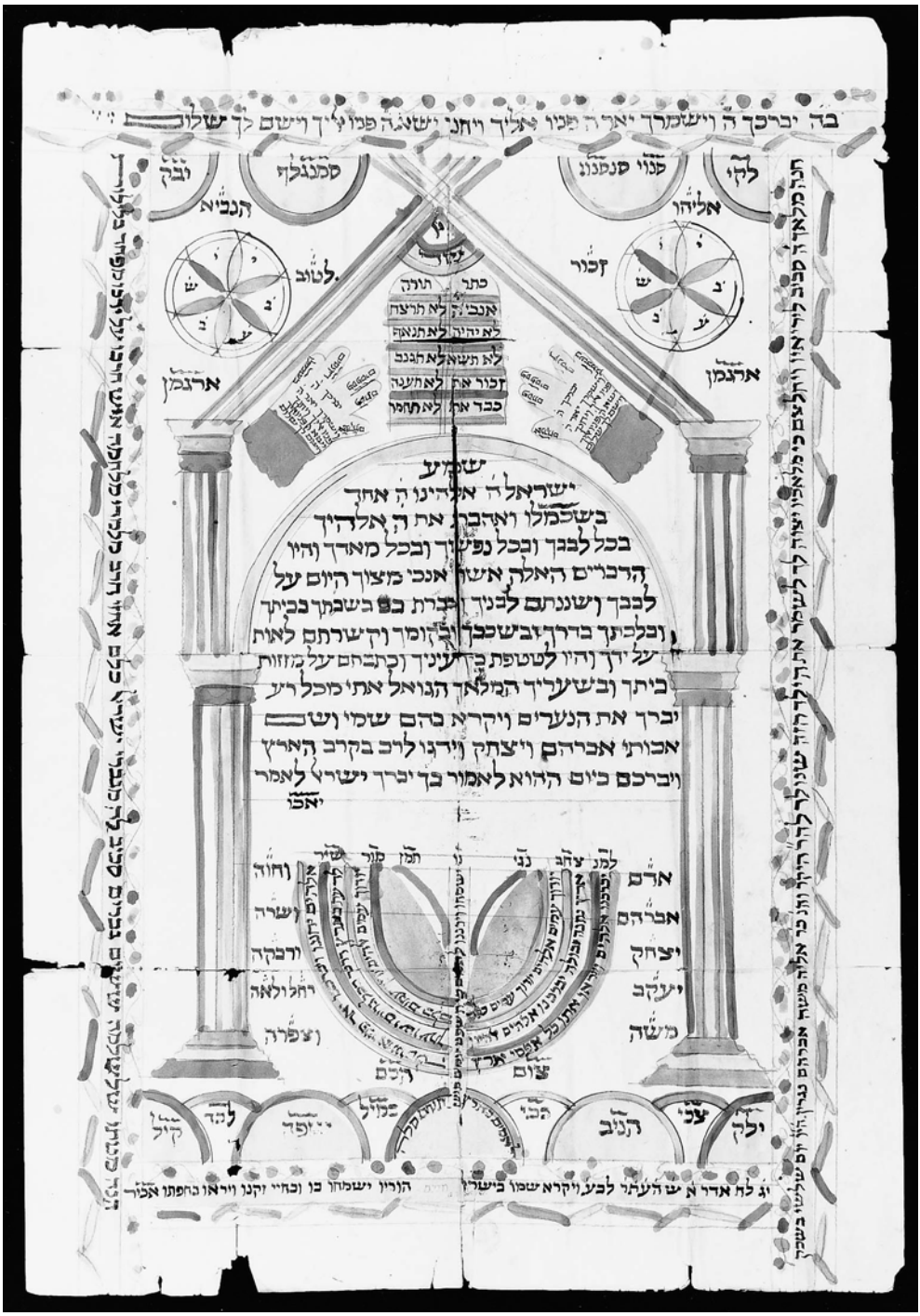

Figure 86. *Aleph*, an illuminated amulet created for the birth of Chaim (Herman) Negrin, dated according to the Hebrew calendar, 5670. Ioannina, Greece, 1910.

Figure 87. *Bar Mitzvah* boy of the Aronson family, New York, early 1900s.

Figure 88. *Bar Mitzvah* boy Hirsh Boyarsky with his parents, Rose and Louis, Brooklyn, June 12, 1960. Hirsh was born in Germany to Holocaust survivor parents. The family immigrated to the United States in 1948.

Figure 89. Brooklyn Hebrew Orphan Asylum girls at the time of their confirmation, Brooklyn, New York, 1920s.

Figure 90. Confirmation certificate given to fifteen-year-old Ernestine Cline by Temple B'nai Israel, Little Rock, Arkansas, May 28, 1933.

Figure 91. Confirmation class on the steps of Congregation B'nai Israel, Little Rock, Arkansas, May 28, 1933.

Figure 92. Engagement contract uniting Shlomo Friedwald and Raizel Isser, probably United States, late nineteenth century. This contract *(tna'im)* anticipates a wedding in the Hebrew month of Nisan.

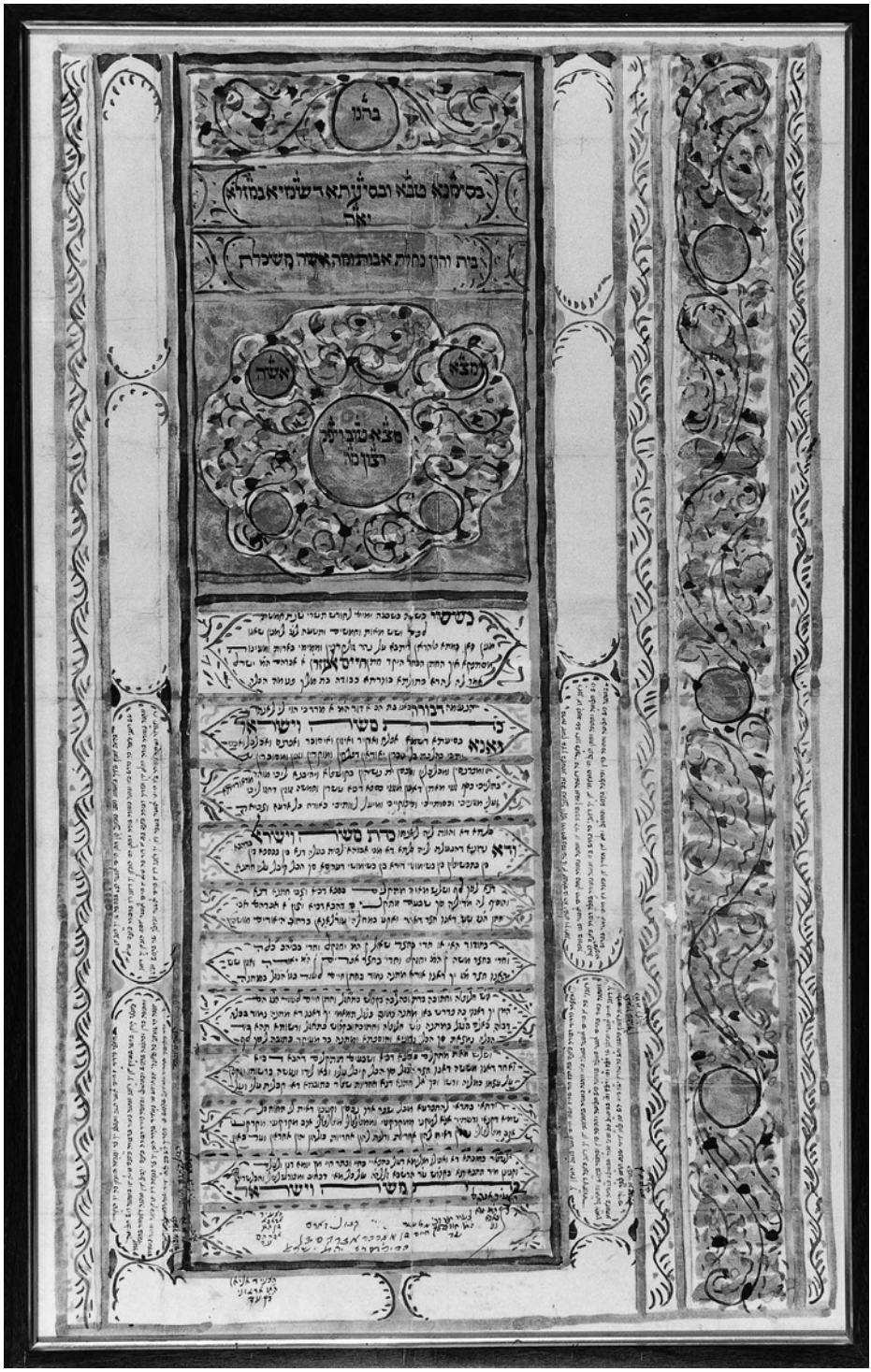

Figure 93. Handwritten engagement *(tna'im)* and marriage contract *(ketubbah)* of Hayim Eliezer, son of Abraham Israel and D'vorah, daughter of David Mordechai, Teheran, Iran, 1898. The conditions of the *tna'im* are written in Judeo-Persian on the sides of the document.

Figure 94. Wedding canopy (*huppah*) embroidered with "AJDC" (American Joint Distribution Committee), Palestine, c. 1945. Wedding canopies were made in Palestine for the JDC, to be used by Holocaust survivors who married in Displaced Persons camp.

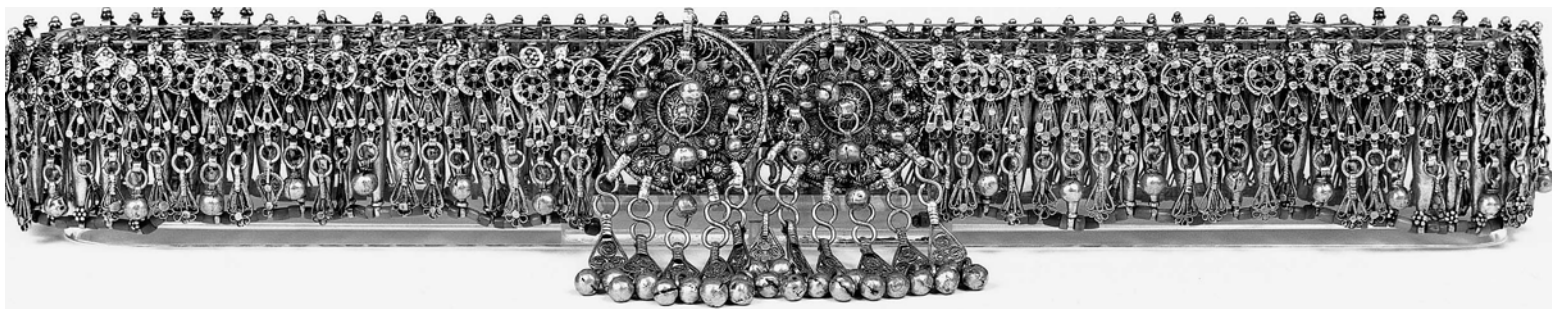

Figure 95. Wedding belt made of silver filigree with coral beads, Sana'a, Yemen, c. 1890. The Jewish silversmiths of Yemen were renowned for their fine craftsmanship.

Figure 96. Else Buxbaum and Seligmann Baer Bamberger celebrate their wedding, Würzburg, Germany, May 26, 1921.

Figure 97. Libus Seidenfeld and Max Rooz record their wedding day with a family portrait in the garden of the Seidenfeld home, Munkacs, Czechoslovakia, c. 1928-1929.

Figure 98. Jewish funeral in Allendorf, Germany, 1927.

Figure 99. Irwin, Yetta, and Sarah Maurer and Mani Steiller visit the grave of Shlomo Zalman ben Peretz ha-Levi and Yaakov ben-Zvi, Tarnow, Poland, 1922.

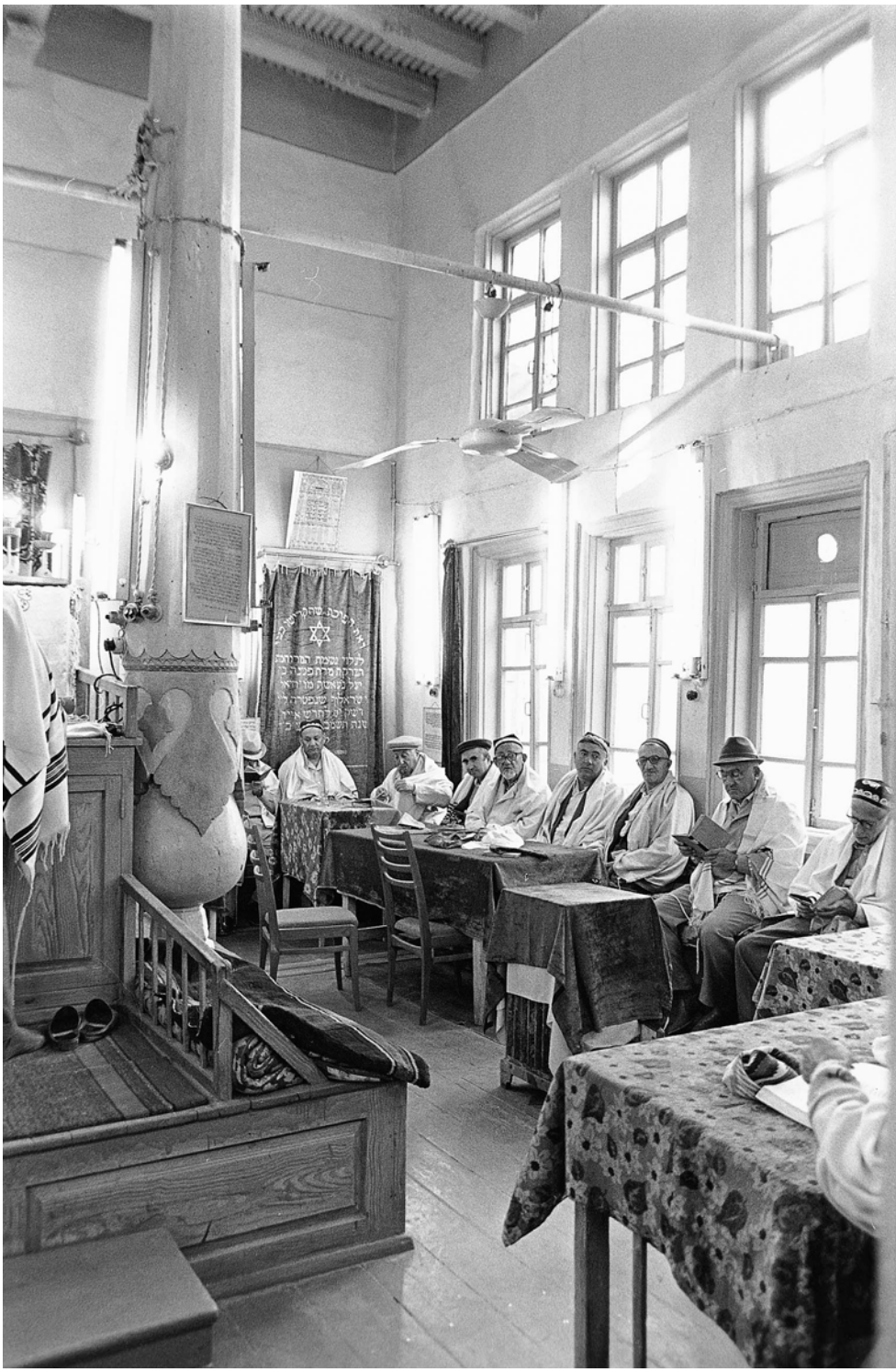

Figure 100. Synagogue services on the morning of Sukkot, Bukhara, Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic, 1985. Photograph by Barbara Pfeffer.

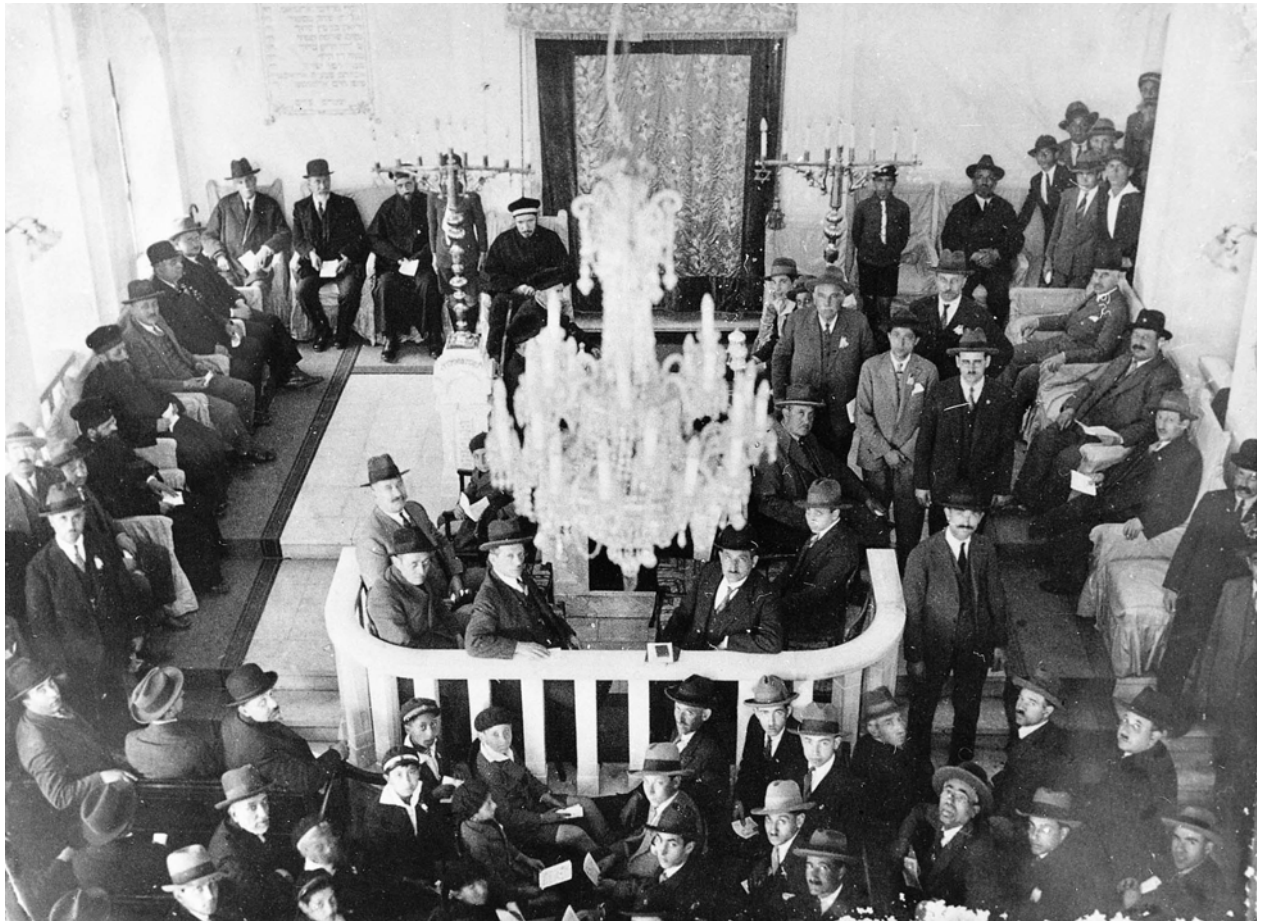

Figure 101. Interior of a synagogue in Salonika, Greece, undated.

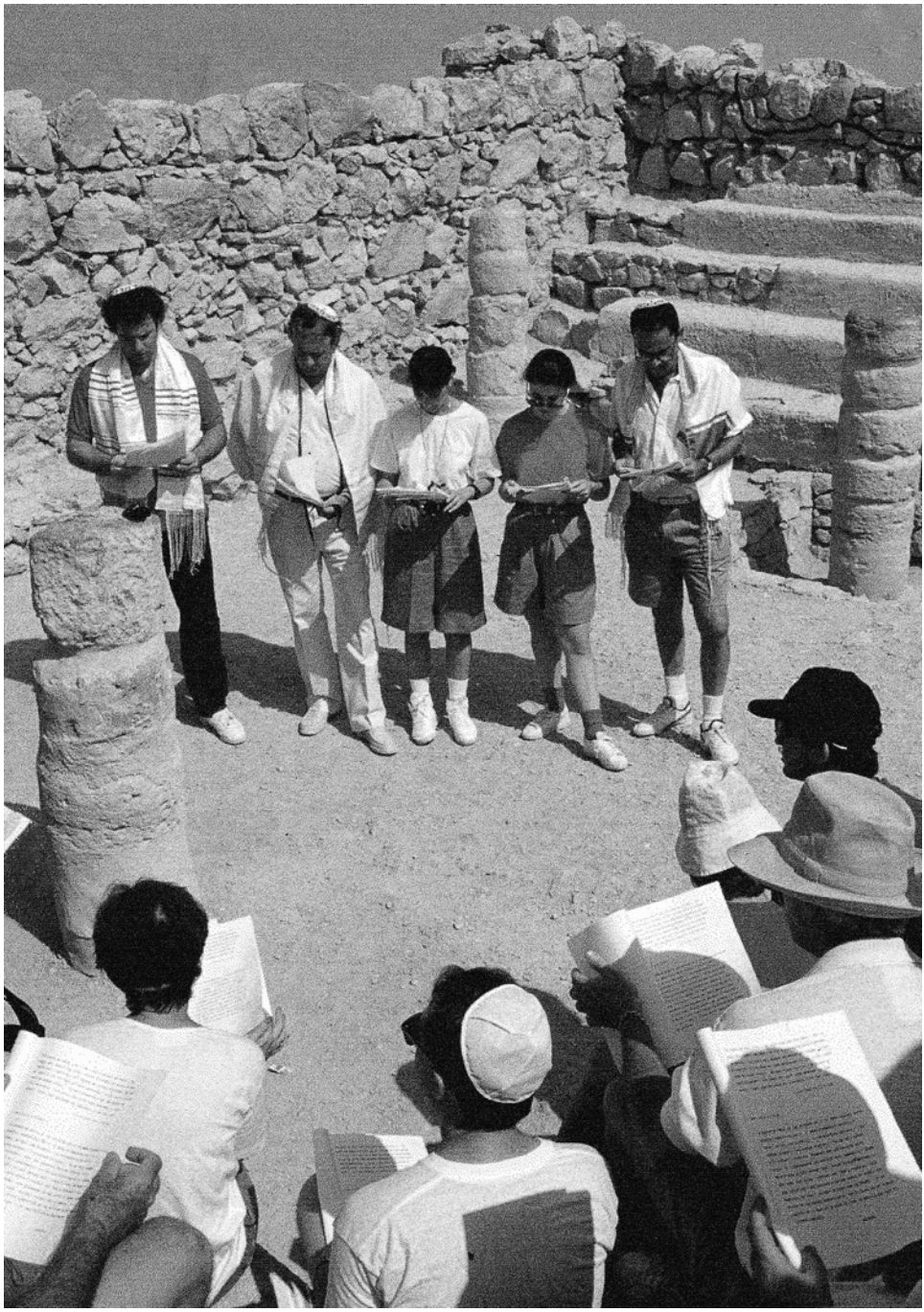

Figure 102. A service at the excavated ancient synagogue on Masada combines history and spirituality, Israel, 1992. Photograph by Richard T. Nowitz.

Figure 103. Male choir of Hinenstraat synagogue, Amsterdam, Holland, undated.

Figure 104. Cantillation of *Shir HaShirim* 1:1-3.

Figure 104 (*cont.*)

שִׁיר הַשִּׁירִים אֲשֶׁר לִשְׁלֹמֹה׃ יִשָּׁקֵנִי מִנְּשִׁיקוֹת פִּיהוּ כִּי־

טוֹבִים דֹּדֶיךָ מִיָּיִן׃ לְרֵיחַ שְׁמָנֶיךָ טוֹבִים שֶׁמֶן תּוּרַק שִׁמְךָ עַל־

כֵּן עֲלָמוֹת אֲהֵבוּךָ׃

The Song of Songs, by Solomon. Oh, give me of the kisses of your mouth, for your love is more delightful than wine. Your ointments yield a sweet fragrance, Your name is like finest oil--therefore do maidens love you.

Figure 105. Biblical Cantillation Signs for *Shir HaShirim* 1:1-3.

Figure 106. Jewish Prayer Modes Used in Shabbat Liturgy.

Figure 106 (*cont.*)

Figure 107. *MiSinai Niggunim.*

Figure 108. Eastern European *Nusah* and Middle Eastern *Maqamat.*

Figure 109. Sephardic Liturgy "*Nishmat Kol Hai*."

Figure 109 (*cont.*)

Figure 109 (*cont.*)

Figure 110. Days of Awe services at the farm of Moses Bloom, Norwood, New Jersey, 1919. This rural area had no rabbi, but people from various communities gathered to hold services together.

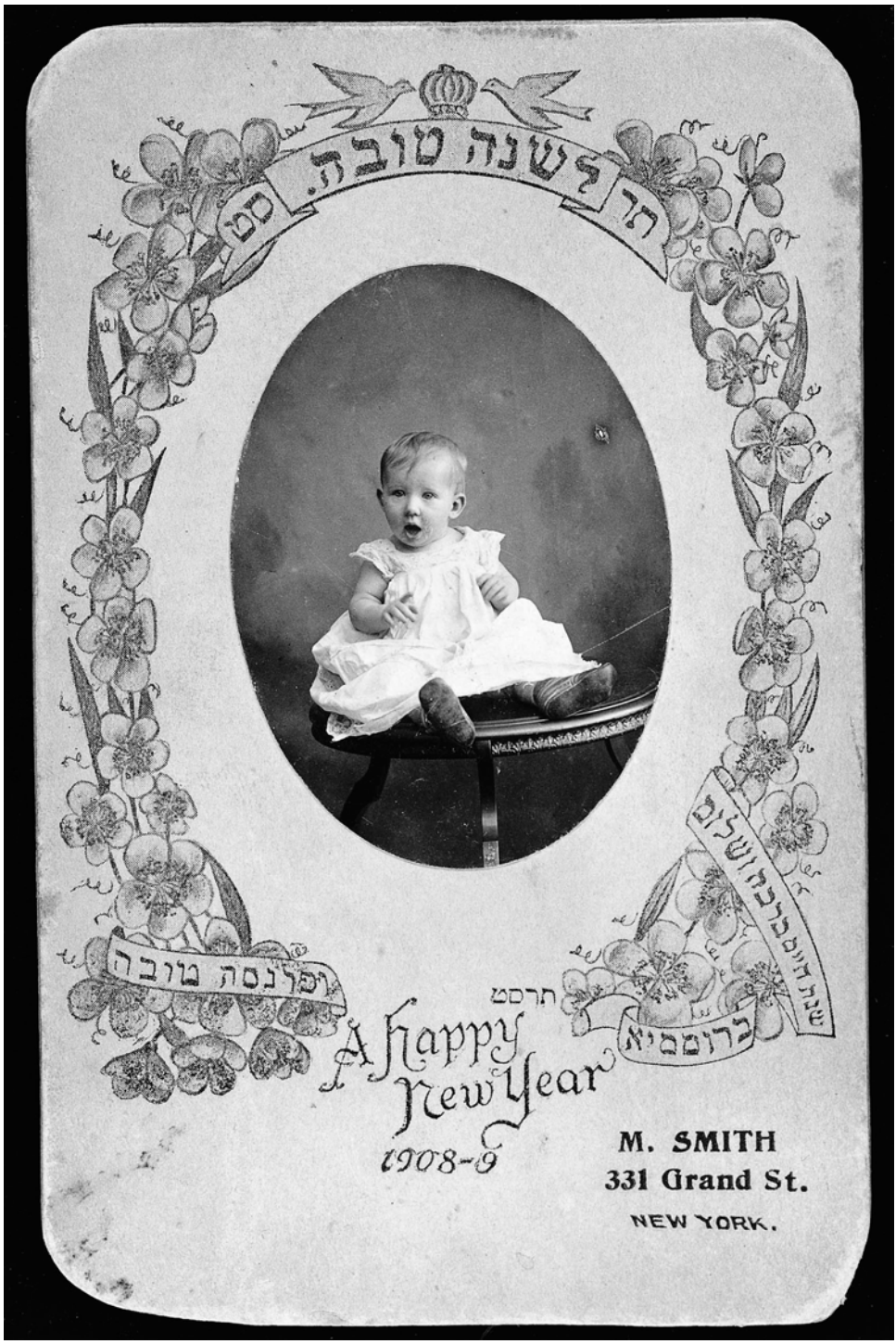

Figure 111. Jewish New Year's card, New York, September 1908.

Figure 112. Passover *seder* at the home of Fannie and Charles Rosenblat, New York, c. 1943-1945.

Figure 113. Hasidic Jews at a *farbrengen* (festive gathering) at the Lubavitch headquarters in Crown Heights, Brooklyn, New York, 1970s. Photograph by Barbara Pfeffer.

Figure 114. "The Examination" by Moritz Daniel Oppenheim (Germany, 1800–1882). In a traditional Jewish home the father reviews what the child has learned, while the mother looks on proudly.

Figure 115. Women sort unleavened bread prepared under strict rabbinical control (*shmurah matzoh*) into boxes in preparation for the celebration of Passover. Amsterdam, Holland, 1930s.

Figure 116. Burning of remaining unleavened products (*chametz*) in preparation for Passover, Amsterdam, Holland, 1928.

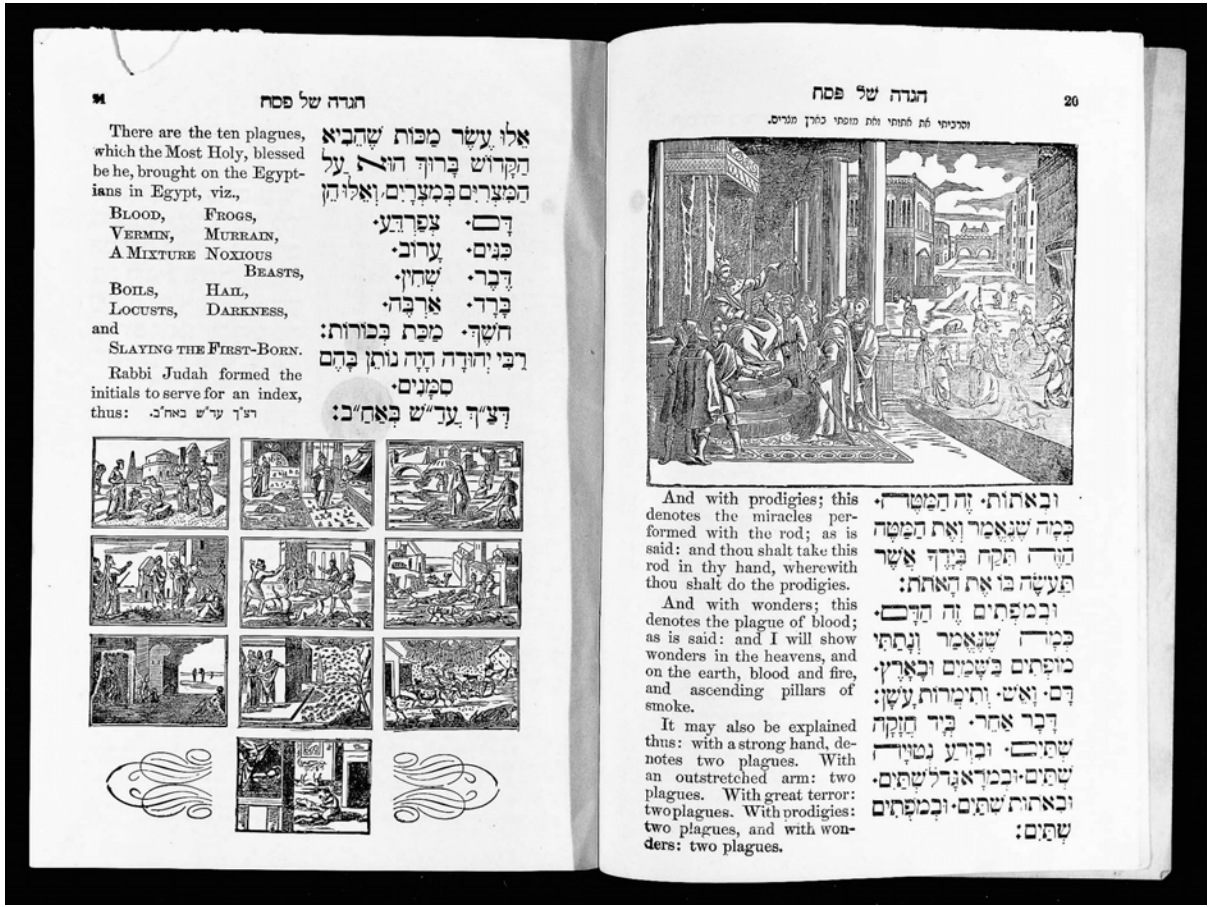

Figure 117. Passover *Haggadah*, "To honor and welcome refugees," for a *seder* at Broadway Central Hotel, New York, April 4, 1939.

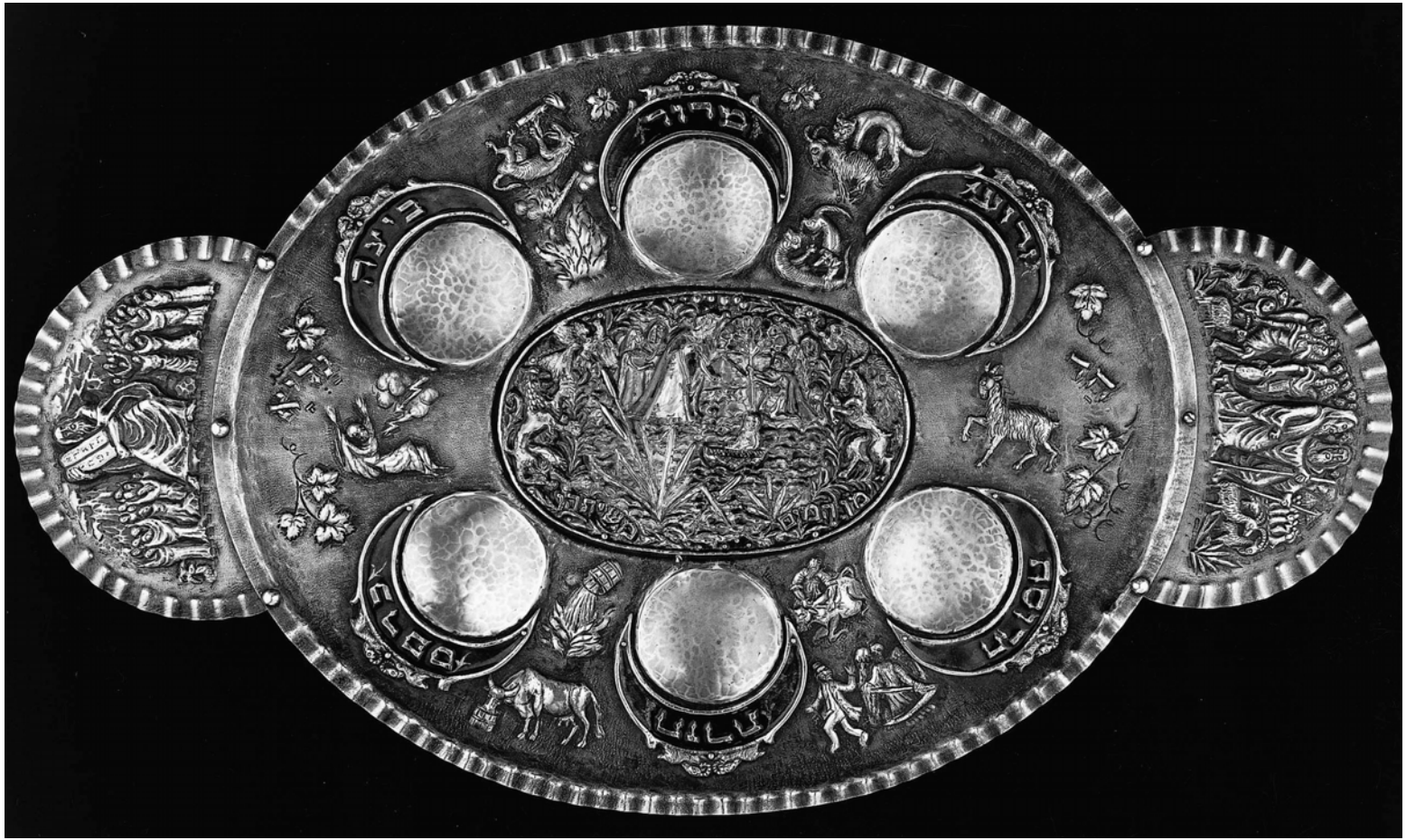

Figure 118. Sterling silver Passover *seder* plate made by Albert Dov Sigal, Israel, 1958. Sigal taught in a secret art school in Romania during the Holocaust. After immigrating to Israel in 1947, he became known as an artist in enamel and silver.

Figure 119. Ceremonial wine glass (*kiddush* cup) used by Isidor and Grete Lefor, Barchfeld, Germany, nineteenth century.

Figure 120. Ritual fringes (*tsitsiot*) for a child, used by Jacob Grunwerg in Kolomea, Austria-Hungary, c. 1900–1910, and brought to the United States when he immigrated before World War I.

Figure 121. Wooden clogs with inlaid mother-of-pearl used by Rachel Rabih-Sutton, Aleppo, Syria, 1898. These special clogs (*babouj il-hamman*) were used for a pre-wedding visit to a *mikveh*, a ritual bath. They were a wedding gift from Moshe Mansoura to his bride.

Figure 122. Silver spice box belonging to Rabbi Ze'ev Wolf Rosenberg from Debrecen, Hungary. Family members flattened and hid the box when they were deported from Hungary to Florisdorf, a family camp in Austria, and later to the Terezin ghetto in Czechoslovakia.

Figure 123. Moshe Chazanovitch, cantor and *shohet* (kosher butcher), prepares to slaughter a chicken. Konstantynow, Poland, 1936.

Figure 124. A page from a record book of the Burial Society of Congregation Ahavat Shalom Winitze, 1889, New York.

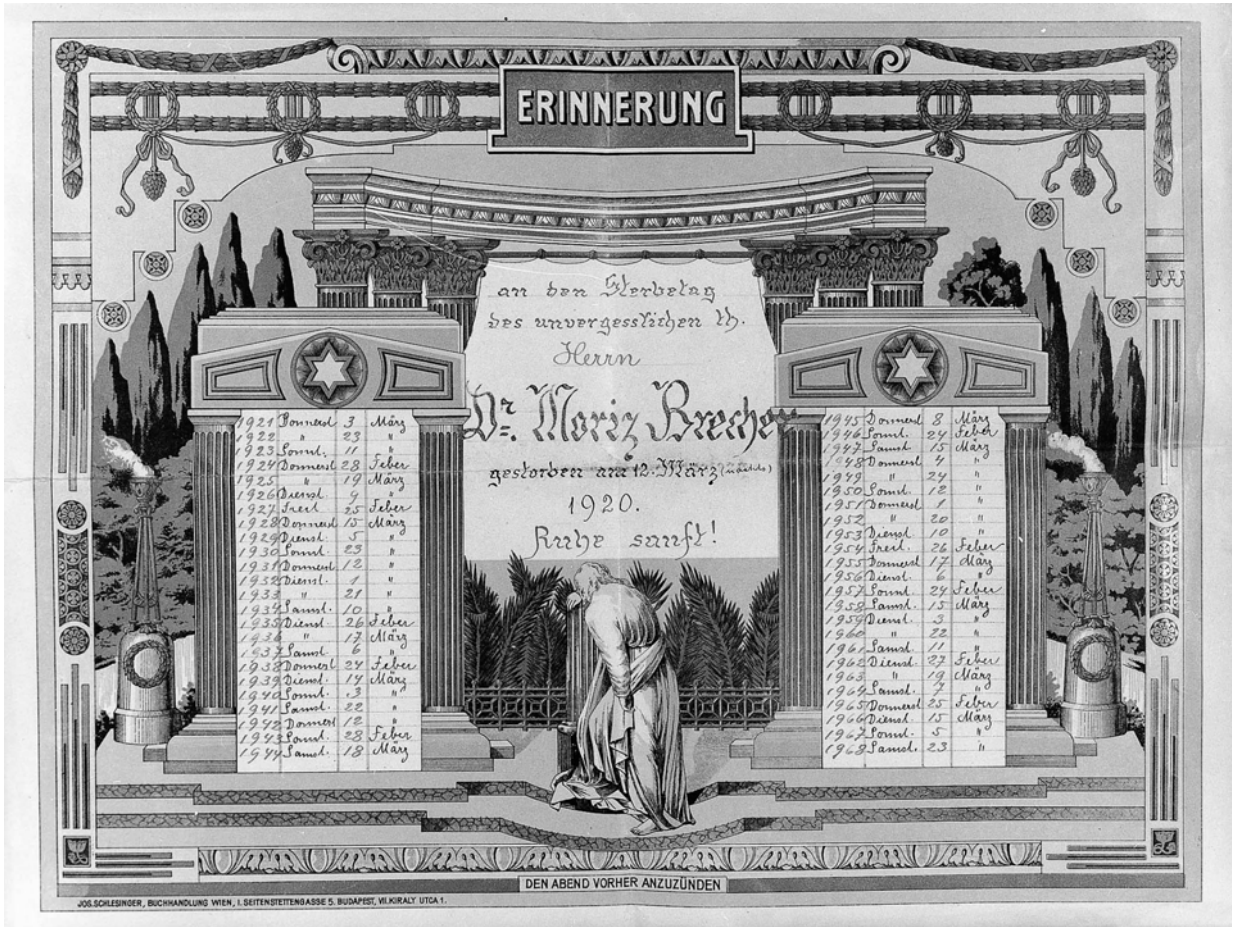

Figure 125. Yahrzeit calendar for Dr. Moritz Brecher, Vienna, Austria, 1920.

Figure 126. Dedicating a new Torah scroll at Camp Massad, founded in 1941, the first Hebrew language summer camp in the United States; Tannersville, Pennsylvania, undated.

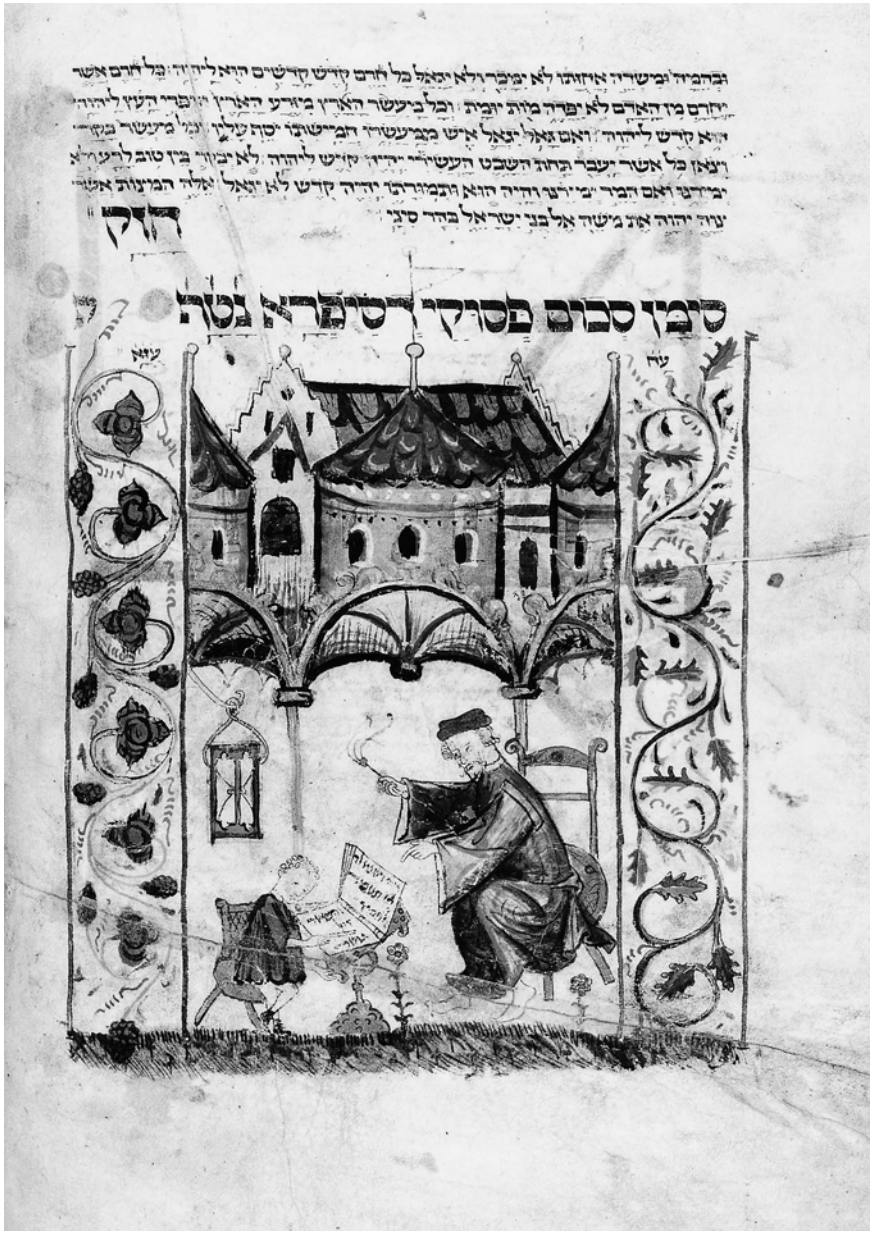

Figure 127. Folio from the Coburg Pentateuch (Add. 19776, f. 72v) showing a teacher and pupil, copied by Simhah ben Samuel Halevi, dated Kislev 5156 (1395).

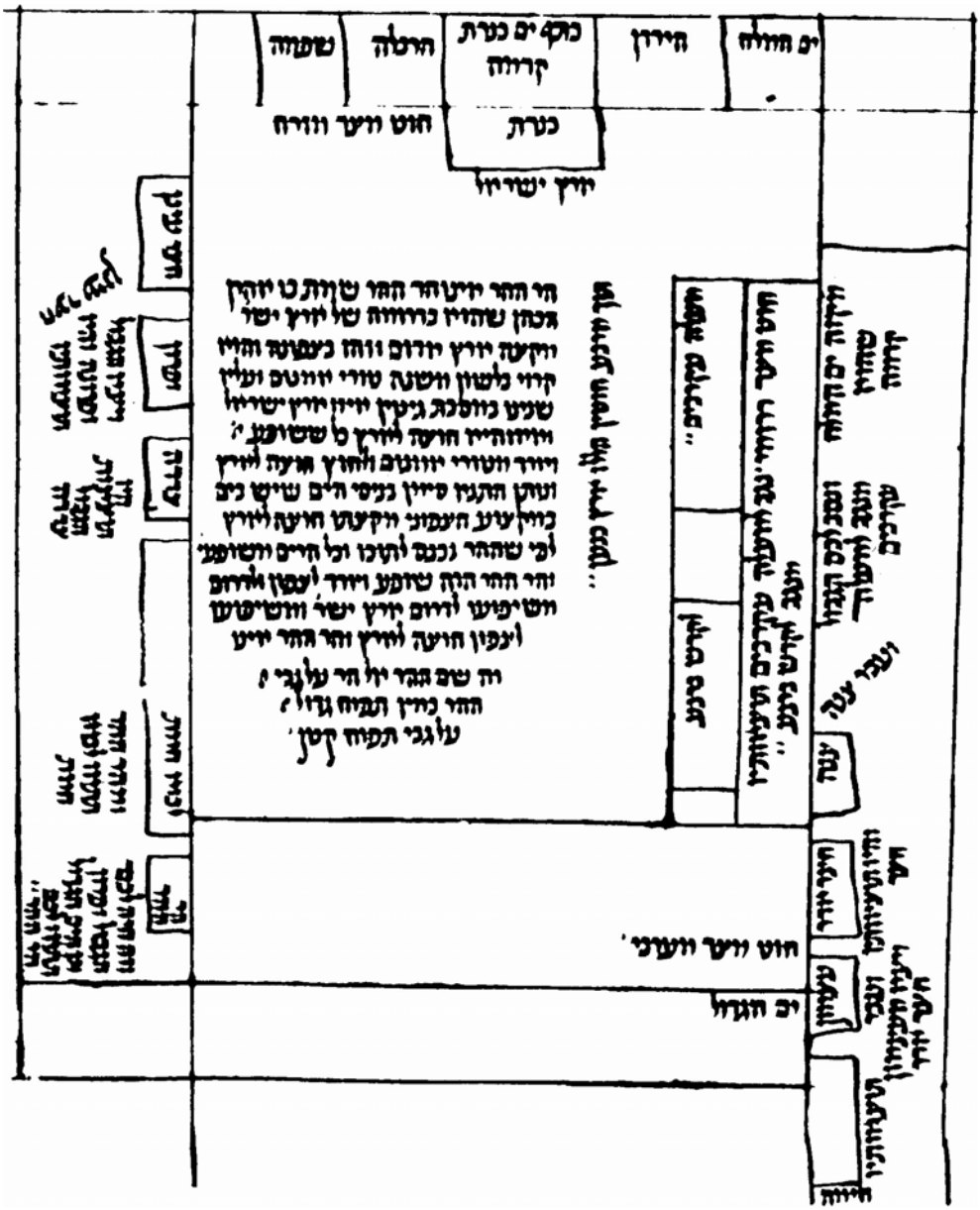

Figure 128. Rashi's map of the boundaries of the land of Israel from his commentary to Num. 34:11, according to Vienna Hebrew ms. 220, folio 79r.